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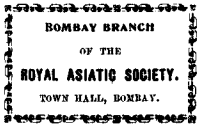

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GAUR:

ITS RUINS AND INSCRIPTIONS.

DÁKHIL GATE. NORTH EAST VIEW.

GAUR

ITS RUINS AND INSCRIPTIONS.

82057

BY THE LATE

JOHN HENRY RAVENSHAW, B.C.S.

EDITED, WITH CONSIDERABLE ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS,

BY HIS WIDOW.

T. 1. 13a

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PREFACE.

IT had long been the wish of my late husband, Mr. J. H. Ravenshaw, of the Bengal Civil Service, to publish the photographs which the Woodbury Company have here assisted me to reproduce. Stationed for some years at Máldah as Magistrate and Collector, he had the opportunity of exploring at leisure the still extant remains of the old Capital of Bengal, and of photographing such of these as were most prominent and best preserved. Some of his pictures will doubtless be familiar to my friends as having attracted admiration at Photographic Exhibitions in Calcutta and elsewhere.

At the beginning of 1867 Mr. Ravenshaw took furlough to England, where he revised the descriptive notes which he had made as he examined the ruins, and threw them together in the form which I have followed in this publication; but beyond printing a few copies of his arranged text, he took no steps till his return to India in 1870. The Archæological Survey of India had then been organized by Major-General Cunningham, and Mr. Ravenshaw reckoned on official assistance in carrying out his undertaking.

Some correspondence with the Government ensued, in which it was proposed to publish selections from Mr. Ravenshaw's photographs, with extracts from the letterpress, in the reports of the Survey. To this selection my husband demurred, and the correspondence was still proceeding when his death occurred in 1874. After some deliberation and consultation with friends, I determined to publish the work myself, on the plan projected by my husband.

Among the friends to whom I am perhaps most indebted for the advice and assistance which were necessary to enable me to carry out my resolution, was Mr. A. Grote, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Royal Asiatic Society. He showed me that much of Mr. Ravenshaw's letterpress had become obsolete, by the publication in the Bengal Society's Journal of Mr. Blochmann's valuable series of historical papers. The text, too, of the inscriptions copied for Mr. Ravenshaw and translated in his narrative, required careful verification; and as rubbings of all these were now to be obtained in Calcutta, he advised my including in my work the series of facsimiles, which have since been so beautifully photozincographed by Major Waterhouse, R.A., of the Surveyor General's Office in Calcutta. A further recommendation of his, of which I have been glad to avail myself, will be found in the following letter, which he permits me here to print:—

"I recommend your annotating your text by extracts from Major W. Francklin's 'Journal of a Route from Rájemehál to Gour, A.D. 1810,' which I find in MS. in the Survey Department of the India Office. A memorandum on the fly leaf, dated Bhaugulpore, April 12th, 1812, shows this Journal to have been sent by the Major to the Honourable the Court of Directors, together with a 'map and drawings, etc., etc.,' which are not now to be found in the office. Major Francklin, whose name is well known as a contributor to the early volumes of the Asiatic Researches, held in 1810 the post of 'Regulating Officer at Bhaugulpore.'

"His descriptions for many of the ruins are fuller and more technical

than those of Buchanan Hamilton, who was then engaged on his survey of Bengal, while the text which accompanies Creighton's drawings scarcely pretends to give any description at all. I cannot find in the India Office Library Catalogues any mention of Moffat's Calcutta publication of these drawings, but if the volume of 1817, published by Black, Parbury & Allen, is, as I suspect, a reprint of it, I concur in the criticism bestowed on the illustrations by Buchanan Hamilton (Martin's 'Eastern India,' vol. iii. p. 71). Creighton, it is true, had been resident in the Gomaltí factory since 1786; but the difference between the state of the ruins as figured by him, and as described by Buchanan Hamilton and Major Francklin within the next twenty years, is too marked to justify the belief that it is due only to their further dilapidation. Creighton's pencil and brush must to some extent have restored the buildings, though perhaps inadvertently, as supposed by Buchanan Hamilton."

The result of giving effect to these suggestions has been, I trust, to add to the historical value of my late husband's work. To Mr. Blochmann I am under the greatest obligations for the readiness with which at my request he revised, almost to the extent of re-writing, a large part of Mr. Ravenshaw's text, and added the chapter explanatory of the Inscriptions which closes this work. To Mr. Grote I have also to return my cordial thanks, as well for the annotations that bear his initials, as for the additions which he has frequently introduced into the text where it required to be made clearer.

CAROLINE RAVENSHAW.

22nd May, 1878.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

GAUR IN ITS RUINS 1

CHAPTER II.

A RIDE THROUGH THE RUINS 5

CHAPTER III.

MÁLDAH AND PAṆDUAH 41

CHAPTER IV.

THE INSCRIPTIONS OF GAUR AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD 69

CHAPTER V.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF GAUR FROM THE MUHAMMADAN CONQUEST TO THE END OF ITS INDEPENDENCE 95

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

GAUR.

PLATE.		TO FACE PAGE
	Dákhil Gate. North-East View	*Frontispiece*
I.	Ságar Dighí	6
II.	Tomb of Makhdúm Akhí Sirájuddín	8
III.	Jan Jan Miyán Mosque	10
IV.	Sadulapúr Ghát	12
V.	Golden Mosque. South View	14
VI.	Golden Mosque. North View	14
VII.	Corridor of Golden Mosque	14
VIII.	Plan of Fort	14
IX.	Dákhil Gate. South View	16
X.	Báis Gají Wall	18
XI.	Section of Báis Gají Wall	18
XII.	Qadam Rasúl Mosque	20
XIII.	Entrance to Court of Qadam Rasúl Mosque	22
XIV.	Fath Khán's Tomb	24
XV.	East Gate of Fort	26
XVI.	Minár	28
XVII.	Tántipára Mosque	30
XVIII.	Lattan or Painted Mosque	32
XIX.	Kotwálí Gate	34
XX.	Fírúzpúr Gate	36
XXI.	Small Golden Mosque. East View	38
XXII.	Small Golden Mosque	38
XXIII.	Ornamental Bricks	40

MÁLDAH.

XXIV.	Gate of Fort	42
XXV.	South Gate of City	42
XXVI.	Outer Wall of Golden Mosque	44

PAṆḌUAH.

PLATE.		TO FACE PAGE
XXVII.	Núr Quṭb 'Álam Gateway	48
XXVIII.	Tomb of Núr Quṭb 'Álam	50
XXIX.	Tomb of 'Ala ul Haq	52
XXX.	Stone Capital. Fig. 1.	54
	Sculptured Figure. Fig. 2.	54
XXXI.	Carved Lintels	54
XXXII.	Golden Mosque	56
XXXIII.	Interior of Golden Mosque	56
XXXIV.	Eklákhí Mosque	58
XXXV.	Entrance to Eklákhí Mosque	58
XXXVI.	Ground Plan of Adínah Mosque	60
XXXVII.	Outer Wall with Entrance to Adínah Mosque	62
XXXVIII.	Arches of Inner Court, Adínah Mosque	62
XXXIX.	Transept, Adínah Mosque	64
XL.	Pulpit in Transept, Adínah Mosque	64
XLI.	Pulpit and Prayer Niche in Transept, Adínah Mosque	64
XLII.	Lower Pillars of Bádsháh ka takht, Adínah Mosque	66
XLIII.	Upper Pillars of „ „ „ „	66
XLIV.	Prayer Niche on „ „ „ „	66

INSCRIPTIONS.

XLV.	No. 1	Inscription on the Adínah Mosque at Paṇḍuah, A.D. 1369	70
	No. 2	„ from „ „ (inside) „ „	70
XLVI.	No. 3	„ „ Hilál's Mosque near the Fort at Máldah, A.D. 1455	72
	No. 4	„ „ the Chhotá Dargáh at Paṇḍuah, A.D. 1459	72
XLVII.	No. 5	„ „ a Mosque at Paṇḍuah, A.D. 1479	74
XLVIII.	No. 6	„ „ Gaur, A.D. 1480	74
	No. 7	„ „ „ „ A.D. 1489	74
XLIX.	No. 8	„ „ „ near Máldah	76
	No. 8A	„ „ „ at Gaur	76
	No. 9	„ „ the Chhotá Dargáh at Paṇḍuah, A.D. 1493	77
L.	No. 10	„ „ a Mosque near Máldah, A.D. 1494	78
	No. 11	„ „ the Fantí Masjid at Máldah, A.D. 1495	78
LI.	No. 12	„ „ Husain Sháh's Madrasah at Gaur, A.D. 1502	80
	No. 13	„ „ a Gate at Gaur, A.D. 1504–5	80
LII.	No. 14	„ „ Husain Sháh's Mosque at Gaur, A.D. 1505	82
	No. 15	„ „ a Mosque at Paṇḍuah, A.D. 1505	82
LIII.	No. 16	„ „ Shaikh Akhí Siráj's Tomb at Gaur, A.D. 1510	84
LIV.	No. 17	„ „ a Gate at Gaur, A.D. 1510	86
	No. 18	„ „ Husain Sháh's Mosque at Gaur, A.D. 1512	86
LV.	No. 19	„ „ a Gate of the Fort of Gaur, A.D. 1512	88
	No. 20	„ „ Daulat Názir's Mosque near Máldah, A.D. 1517	88
LVI.	No. 21	„ „ Fath Khán's Mosque near Máldah, A.D. 1524	90
	No. 22	„ „ a Tomb near Máldah, A.D. 1528–9	90
LVII.	No. 23	„ „ the Qadam Rasúl Mosque at Gaur, A.D. 1530–1	92
LVIII.	No. 24	„ „ a Mosque near Máldah, A.D. 1531–2	94
	No. 25	„ „ Jan Jan Miyán Mosque in Sadullapúr, Gaur, A.D. 1534–5	94
Map of Gaur and its Environs, embracing Paṇḍuah			*at end of vol.*

GAUR:

ITS RUINS AND INSCRIPTIONS.

CHAPTER I.

GAUR IN ITS RUINS.

CONCEALED in deep jungle, and situated in perhaps one of the least-civilized districts of the Bengal Presidency, are to be found the ruins of Gaur, or Lak'hnautí, once the capital and the most populous city of Eastern India, as well under the Hindú, as under the first Muhammadan dynasties.

These ruins are situated about eight miles to the south of Angrézabád (English Bázár), the civil station of the district of Máldah, and on the eastern bank of the Bhágírathí, a stream which joins the Ganges below Gaur. The present course of the latter river, now distant some six miles to the westward, appears to be fast cutting its way back towards the old city, beneath the walls of which it formerly flowed nearly in the same course as that now occupied by the Bhágírathí. This is the generally accepted opinion, though some accounts relate that the Ganges flowed to the east, and that the great embankments which still exist in that direction were constructed to protect the city from its encroachments. The natural features of the surrounding country in some degree favour this opinion, for the entire district of Máldah is interspersed with large tracts of low ground, swamps, and hollows, overgrown with the hijal-tree *(Barringtonia acutangula)*, which may not improbably, in times gone by, have formed the beds of one or more great rivers.

The traditions that have been handed down of the wealth and magnificence

of Gaur would appear almost fabulous, did not the immense space covered by its ruins, the extent of its walls, the magnificent proportions of its gateways, and the elaborate architecture of its public buildings and palaces, all bear testimony that the traditions in this case are no fictions. The history of the city, under Hindú rule, is lost in the lapse of centuries since the Muhammadan conquest in A.H. 595 (A.D. 1198).* It is known to have attained its magnificence under the Moslem rule, and to have continued great till the middle of the sixteenth century, when the Portuguese historian, Faria y Souza, describes it as containing 1,200,000 inhabitants, and as so crowded that, at the time of religious festivals and processions, numbers of people were trodden to death. The streets are stated to have been broad, straight, and lined on both sides with trees to protect the populace from the rays of the sun.

Vandalism, as well as Time, has contributed to the general destruction of the ancient capital. There is not a village, scarce a house, in the district of Máldah, or in the surrounding country, that does not bear evidence of having been partially constructed from its ruins. The cities of Murshidábád, Máldah, Rájmahál, and Rangpúr, have almost entirely been built with materials from Gaur, and even its few remaining edifices are being daily despoiled.

The term Gaur not only includes the city within its fortified walls, but also its extensive suburbs. The walled city was probably about ten miles long, by one mile and a half broad, but the environs extended to twenty miles in length by three or four in width.

The boundary embankments still exist: they were works of vast labour, and were, on the average, about 40 feet in height, being from 180 to 200 feet at the base. The facing throughout was of masonry, and numerous buildings and edifices appear to have crowned their summits; but the whole of the masonry has now disappeared, and the embankments are overgrown with a dense jungle, impenetrable to man and affording a safe retreat for various beasts of prey. The eastern embankment was double, a deep moat, about 150 yards wide, separating the two lines. A main road ran north and south through the city, its course being still traceable by the remains of bridges and viaducts. The western face of the city is now open, and probably always was so, having been well protected by the Ganges, which, as already observed, ran under its walls. In the centre of the north and south embankments are openings, showing that

* This is the date assumed by Mr. Blochmann, J.B.A.S. XLIV. Pt. 1, p. 276. Mr. Thomas fixes it four years later, and Major Raverty as many years earlier, or in A.D. 1194.—A. G.

these fortifications had been perforated to afford ingress to and egress from the city. At the northern entrance there are no remains, but at the southern still stands the Kutwálí Gate, a beautiful ruin measuring fifty-one feet in height under the archway.

Within the space enclosed by these embankments and the river, stood the city of Gaur proper, and in the south-west corner was situated the Fort containing the palace, of which it is deeply to be regretted that so little is left. Early in the present century there was much to be found here worthy of notice, including many elegantly carved marbles; but these are said to have become the prey of the Calcutta undertakers and others for monumental purposes. On the road-side, between the palace and the Bhágírathí river, there now lies, split in twain, a vast block of hornblende, which, having been carried thus far, has been dropped and left as broken on the highway to bear its testimony against the spoilers. Surrounding the palace is an inner embankment of similar construction to that which surrounds the city, and even more overgrown with jungle. A deep moat protects it on the outside.

Radiating north, south, and east from the city, other embankments are to be traced running through the suburbs, and extending in certain directions for thirty or forty miles. These include the great causeways, or main roads leading to the city, which were constructed by Sultan Ghiyásuddín.* The greater part of them were metalled, and here and there they are still used as roads, but most of them are, like those within the city, overgrown with thick jungle.

The whole country within the fortifications, and indeed, for many miles around, is wild, and studded with numerous tanks or reservoirs, which, with one exception, are overgrown with rank grass and reeds, and abound in alligators. The undulations of the surface are caused by fallen ruins; and the unproductive character of the soil, mingled as it is with broken bricks and *débris*, has, until within the last few years, prevented any attempt to bring it under cultivation. Mustard crops are now raised upon it, and in the month of December the

* Minháj-i-Saráj, the author of the Tabakát-i-Násiri, who visited Gaur in 641 A.H. (1243 A.D.) or seventeen years after Ghiyásuddín's death, thus speaks of these important causeways: "From Lakhanavatí to the gate of the city of Lakhan-or, on the one side and as far as Díw-kot on the other side, the Sultán Ghiyásud-Dín Iwaz caused an embankment to be constructed, extending about ten days' journey, for this reason, that in the rainy season the whole of that tract becomes inundated and that route is filled with mud-swamps and morass, and if it were not for these dykes, it would be impossible for people to carry out their intentions, or reach the various structures and inhabited places, except by means of boats. From his time, through the construction of these embankments, the route was opened up to the people at large."—Bib. Indica, Tabakát-i-Násiri, Raverty's translation, p. 586.—A. G.

whole country is golden with a profusion of mustard-blossom, relieved by creepers and wild flowers. As the cold season advances the scene varies, but is still attractive, for the country abounds in Símul or silk cotton trees *(Bombax malabaricum)*, and in January their leafless branches burst into bloom with brilliant crimson flowers, the glare of which is softened by the delicate green of the tamarind trees. A month later the Símul flowers fade and the pods shed their silky fibre, which, falling on the ground, covers it, as it were, with a coating of snow.

Such is Gaur of the present day: a lamentable wreck of its former elegance and grandeur.

CHAPTER II.

A RIDE THROUGH THE RUINS.

THE description of the ruins which follows applies to them as they stood when photographed in 1865-67, and as they would most conveniently be visited in succession by a person wishing to explore Gaur. The state of the country to be traversed would require the use of a horse or elephant; and the best point from which to start on such an expedition would be the English Bazaar.

On leaving the Máldah station, signs of the proximity of ruins at once meet the view; indeed they exist within the town, for there is scarcely a building in Angrezábád that does not display in its construction portions either of embossed brick, encaustic tiles, or carved marbles that once belonged to Gaur.

Very shortly after passing the first milestone on the road to Rájmahál, we come upon a high raised road, beautifully wooded on both sides with mangoe trees. This was one of the causeways of Ghiyásuddín. To the right may be observed several other similar embankments, now overgrown with forest trees, which are said to have at one time enclosed the royal palace of Ballál Sén, whose dynasty was subverted by the Muhammadan invasion. To the left another causeway, running across a swamp, leads to the northern suburbs of Gaur, and extends to the Durbasiní gate on the banks of the Bhágírathí. From the junction point of these causeways we ride eastward for about two miles, and then take a circuitous route, which, after a further ride of four miles, brings us to the banks of perhaps the largest piece of artificial water in the world.

The Great Ságar Dighí.

This piece of artificial water is nearly one mile long by half a mile broad; the actual water itself measures 1,600 yards by 800 yards. Its length is from north to south, proving its Hindú origin; indeed, nearly all the great reservoirs of Gaur and the surrounding country give similar evidence of their being the work of Hindús. The Ságar Dighí had six ghâts or landing places of masonry, each sixty yards in breadth; four of these faced each other on the east and west banks, and there were two on the north and south sides. These are now only distinguishable by the mass of bricks and stones accumulated over their ruins, and by the more gradual slope of the banks towards the water's edge.

This great work is said to have been commenced in the reign of Lachman Sén, about A.H. 520 (A.D. 1126).

On the west may be obtained a full view of the extent of this reservoir. It is a beautiful scene: the high banks formed by the excavations are densely wooded to the water's edge, which is overgrown with rank tall grass.

SÁGAR DIGHI.

Tomb of Makhdúm Akhí Sirájuddín.

At the north-west corner of the tank, but approachable only through a heavy bamboo jungle, is an endowment to Makhdúm Sháh, a saint whose tomb is still standing. This is conspicuous for its two small but elegant arches. On the northern door of the outer wall of the mausoleum is the following inscription, engraved on black hornblende :—

(*Vide* Facsimile, No. 16, Plate 53.)

قد بنى هذا الباب الرّوضة مخدوم شيخ اخي سراج الدّين السّلطان المعظّم المكرّم علاؤ الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفّر حسين شاه السّلطان بن سيد اشرف الحسينى خلّد الله ملكه و سلطانه فى سنة ستّ عشر و تسعماية

'The door of the tomb of the venerated Makhdúm Shaikh Akhí Sirájuddín was built by the great and liberal king, 'Aláuddunyáwaddín Abul Muzaffar Husain Sháh, the king, son of Sayyid Ashraf ul-Husainí—may God perpetuate his kingdom and rule! In the year 916 A.H. (A.D. 1510).'*

* Major Francklin's report gives the two following inscriptions as being recorded in the Tughra character over the gateways of this Durgáh :—

نصر من الله و فتح قريب و بشر المومنين فالله خير حافظا وهو ارحم الراحمين

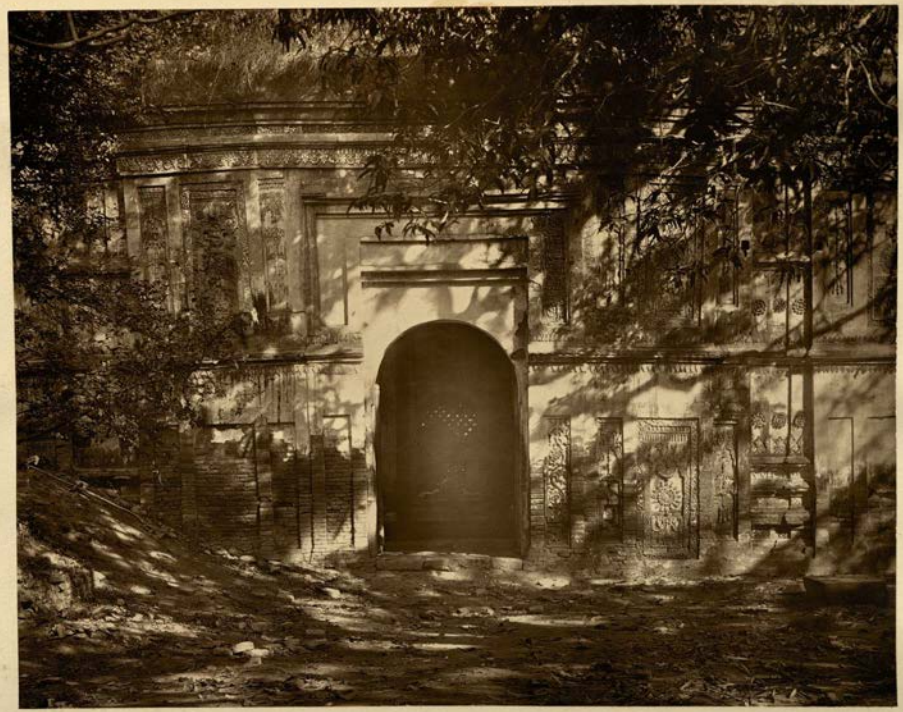
Quran, Sura lxi. 13, and xii. 64.

'Assistance is from God and victory at hand, and God is the guardian and protector of the faithful, and He is the most merciful, the most compassionate.'

Over another gateway, at the same place :—

بنى هذا لباب السلطان الحسيني السلطان المعظم علاء الدنيا و الدين بن اشرف الحسيني خلد الله ملكه و سلطانه في سنه عشر و تسعمايه

'This gateway was erected by the most illustrious sovereign Sultan the Huseini Ala Uddinnya o ud din bin Ashraf ul Huseini, whose dominion may God perpetuate, A.H. 910.'—A. G.



TOMB OF MAKHDÚM AKHÍ SIRÁJUDDÍN.

Jan Jan Miyán Mosque.

Near the mausoleum stands a very elegant mosque of embossed brick, known as the Jan Jan Miyán mosque, so called after a lady of that name. It is supported inside by fine stone pillars. This building is in excellent repair, and, though much overgrown with trees projecting from all quarters of the roof, the domes are still standing. The following inscription is in good preservation over the centre door:—

(*Vide* No. 25, Plate 58.)

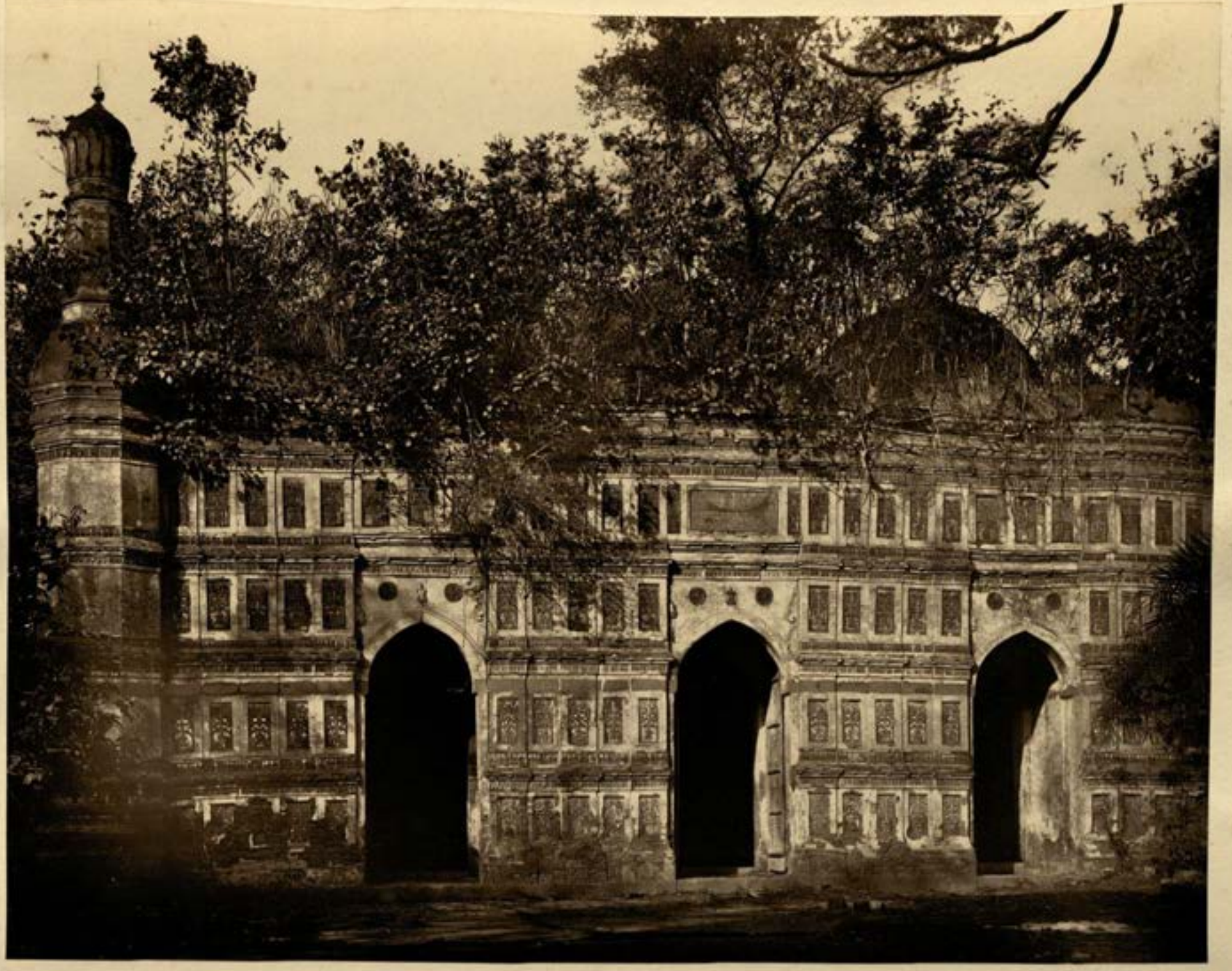
قال النبى صلى الله عليه و سلم من بنى مسجدا لله بنى الله له بيتا مثله فى الجنة *
بنى هذا المسجد الجامع فى عهد السلطان ابن السلطان غياث الدنيا والدين محمود شاه
السلطان ابن حسين شاه السلطان خلد الله ملكه وسلطانه و بانيه بيبى التى دامت سيرها
وادام الله معاليها فى سنه احدى اربعين و تسعماية *

'The Prophet says, "He who builds a mosque for God, will have a house like it built for him in Paradise." This Jami Mosque was built during the reign of the king, the son of a king, Ghiyásuddunya-waddín Abul Muzaffar Mahmud Sháh, the king, son of Husain Sháh, the king—may God perpetuate his kingdom and rule. Its builder is a lady,—May she long live, and may God continue her high position! 941 A.H. (A.D. 1534-35).' *

* Major Francklin records this inscription, omitting the words

وبانيه بيبي التي دامت سيرها وادام الله معاليها

A. G.



JANJAN MIVÁN MOSQUE.

Sadulapúr Ghát.

At a little more than a mile from the mosque, a bye path leads to the Bhágírathí River at Sadulapúr Ghát, a place of peculiar sanctity to the Hindús. Throughout the period of Muhammadan rule in Gaur, this spot alone was left to the Hindú population for the performance of their sacred rites, and here all the dead were burnt. The sacred ghát still exists on the banks of the stream, and thousands annually attend to celebrate their worship of the local deity. Just above the bank is a beautiful grove of very old trees, which afford a grateful and refreshing shade to the pilgrims. From this point commenced the outer rampart of the city, running east from the stream.

SADULAPÚR GHÁT.

Following the outer rampart till it reaches the high road, a ride southward of two miles brings us to the second line of ramparts which enclosed the actual city, separating about one-third of it to the north. This northern part is somewhat marshy, and was never apparently so densely inhabited as the rest of the city. An entrance in the rampart points out the place where the northern gate once stood, but of the gate itself there are no remains. The road passes through the opening, and we find ourselves among ruins and tanks of every size, all overgrown with weeds and tall rank grass. Handsome hornblende pillars, once the portals of a building now completely demolished, stand on the left. Their size and great weight seems to have protected them from being carried off. It is said that they belonged to the house of the Diwán or prime minister of the city. A short distance beyond, we arrive at the Piyásbárí tank, literally 'the abode of thirst.' Its waters are supposed to have been so poisonous as to destroy life in a few days, and as Abul Fazl tells us, 'criminals capitally condemned were,' until Akbar stopped the practice, 'allowed no other drink than this water.'*

Further on is another tank, the banks of which are beautifully wooded, and abound in ruins. It has long had a local reputation for its so-called tame alligators, which come for their food to the call of a pious Maulawí.

Here we leave the road, and at a short distance to the west reach the village of Rámkél, where, on the 12th June and three succeeding days, a large Méla or fair is yearly held. It is much frequented by the Barindís or inhabitants of the Barind, a large tract of undulating and wild country to the east of Máldah. These Barindís are a peculiar race differing from both Hindú and Muhammadan. Quiet and peaceably disposed, they seldom leave their forest retreats, and live altogether apart from the other inhabitants of the district. In form they are short thick-set men, with high cheek bones, and somewhat resemble the Asámese in appearance.

* See Gladwin's translation of Ain Akbari, vol. ii. p. 8, whence Montgomery Martin has probably borrowed the same tradition. It is quite possible that the noxious property of this water was a fable even in Abul Fazl's time, but had it been suppressed as such in the Ain, the courtly historian would have lost the opportunity of ascribing to Akbar the discontinuance of an inhuman practice. At all events, the water is described in Major Francklin's report as 'excellent.'—A. G.

Golden Mosque.

On some raised ground immediately to the south of Rámkél stands the Báradíwarí, or Great Golden Mosque, perhaps the finest memorial of Gaur. An arched corridor running along the whole front of the original building is the principal portion now standing. It is faced throughout with large blocks of black hornblende, and measures 180 feet in length by 80 in breadth. There are eleven arches on either side of the corridor, and one at each end of it, from which probably the Mosque has obtained the name of Báradíwarí or 'the twelve doored.' These arches are surmounted by eleven domes in fair preservation. Of the rest of the building only the outer wall remains; two of the Illustrations give portions of the inner side of this wall where it joins the corridor at the north and south ends. The central space is covered with broken columns, large stones and masses of masonry overgrown with jungle. To the east of the mosque is a courtyard with three gates, all in a most dilapidated state, and facing the east gate is a fine tank. Huge pipal trees grow out of every crevice, and a forest of tamarinds so completely enshrouds the building, that from no quarter can an exterior view be obtained of it. There is no inscription whatever on the building, but it was commenced by Husain Sháh, and completed by his son Nuçrat Sháh.*

* This mosque is thus described by Major Francklin, in whose time the inscription appears to have been in its place:—

'It is a building of a very extraordinary construction. You enter by an arched gateway of stone twenty-six feet in height and six in breadth. After passing through some very thick jungle, you approach the building.

'The mosque in form resembles an oblong square, and originally consisted of four separate colonnades, arched and roofed over, and covered by handsome domes, in all forty-four in number. The front of this mosque is one hundred and eighty feet in length, and forty feet in height; eleven arched doorways of solid stone, ten feet high by six broad, afford a noble entrance; six minarets, or columns of brown stone faced with black marble, adorn the building; bands of blue marble about twelve inches in breadth embrace the column from the base to the capital, and are adorned with a profusion of flower-work carved in the marble. The four aisles or cloisters which compose this magnificent building are of unequal dimensions,—that on entering is the largest. The arched doorways, both within and on the outside, are faced with black marble, but above them the domes are built of brick.

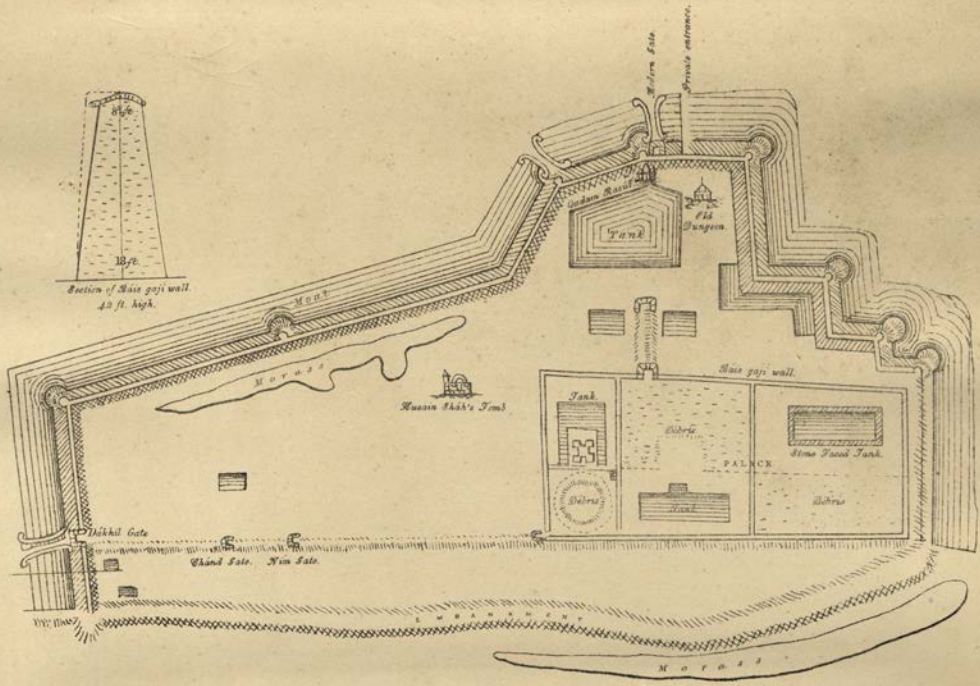
'The plinths of the outer doorways are each ornamented with three roses carved in stone. The arches are pointed, and may be defined to be of the Saracenic style of architecture—they resemble those of many of the mosques at old Delhi, erected by Patan sovereigns of the Ghor and Lodi dynasties.

'The whole appearance of this building is strikingly grand, exhibiting the taste and munificence

GOLDEN MOSQUE. SOUTH VIEW.

GOLDEN MOSQUE. NORTH VIEW

CORRIDOR OF GOLDEN MOSQUE.



PLAN OF FORT
ENLARGED FROM CREIGHTON'S MAP OF 1801.

of the Prince who erected it. To me it appeared extraordinary that more notice had not been taken of it by travellers who have visited the spot.

'As the mosque bears no marks whatever of gold, its name Sona Masjid must, in my opinion, have originated in the bulkiness of the materials and the expense of the erection, as both the stone and marble of which it is composed are of great solidity and durability, and were no doubt brought from a considerable distance.

'Three out of the four colonnades are in a dilapidated state, but sufficient remains in that which is perfect to show the original design of the work.

'The following is a copy of the inscription on this building, cut in the Toghra character. The letters are about nine inches in length :

قال النبي صلي الله عليه و سلم من بني المسجد الله تعالي له بيتا في الجنة بني هذا
لمسجد الجامع السلطان المعظم المكرم السلطان ابن السلطان ناصر الدين والدنيا ابو المظفر
نصرت شاه السلطان ابن حسين شاه السلطان ابن سيد اشرف الحسيني خلد الله ملكه
و سلطانه و اعلي امره وشا نه في سن اثني و ثلثين و تسع مايه

"The Prophet (on whom be the blessing of God!) has said, He who builds a mosque for God, deserves Paradise. This Jámi' Mosque was erected by the most illustrious Sultán, son of a Sultán Náçir-uddín-wuddunyá Abul Muzaffar Nuçrat Sháh Sultán, son of Husain Sháh Sultán, son of Sayyid Ashraf, the Husainí, may God perpetuate his rule, A.H. 932 (A.D. 1526)."

This inscription will be seen to bear date in the year previous to that of the Nuçrat Sháh inscription, No. 17, published by Mr. Blochmann, J. B. A. S. vol. xliii. pt. i. p. 307. The latter seems to have been found in private hands at Serámpúr, and also records the foundation of a Jámi' Mosque. —A. G.

Dákhil Gate.

Passing through the corridor of the Golden Mosque, which is sufficiently large to admit mounted elephants, the huge rampart of the fortress, covered with forest trees, faces the view to the south, and a little to the west, perforating the rampart, stands the Dákhil or Salámí Gate, the northern entrance to the fort. The surrounding moat can be forded in dry weather, and this elegant gateway entered. It is built very substantially of small red bricks, which are generally employed in the Gaur structures, and shows signs of having been highly ornamented with embossed bricks, traces of which can still be seen, even on the dilapidated towers which adorn the four corners. The arch is of great height, and forms a corridor through the gateway of 112 feet in length. On either side of this passage there are four doors leading into rooms, which were probably used by the guard. The front of the building is 70 feet. There is no memorial stone left, but it is supposed to have been built by Bárbak Sháh in the fifteenth century.

The fort was nearly one mile in length, and averaged from 600 to 800 yards in breadth; the base of the rampart which surrounded it, and which was faced with masonry, was 180 feet wide. This masonry has altogether fallen, but excavations in any part lay the stones and brickwork bare. It is probable that the heights of this vast rampart were once topped with houses, but they are now overgrown with trees to such an extent, that the jungle is scarcely penetrable.

DÁKHIL GATE. SOUTH VIEW.

Báis Gají Wall.

Within the Dákhil gateway a vast scene of desolation confronts us. The entire enclosure is crowded with the ruins of buildings, of which scarce one remains. Proceeding due south there are several mounds, on more than one of which stood other gates, including the Chand Gate figured by Creighton, forming a triumphal entry to the palace. In the south-west corner of the fort stood the palace, of which some of the walls still exist. They are 66 feet in height, and of great thickness, and were called Báisgají (22 yards) in consequence. The space enclosed by these walls was 700 yards long by 250 wide, and was divided into three courts, of which the north court was again subdivided. It is now a mere mass of ruins, one small tomb and some of the partition walls alone standing.*

* Major Francklin, describing the palace walls, says:

'The upper part of the parapet is decorated with a profusion of flower work carved in the brick. The palace is entirely in ruins. It was formerly divided into three parts, viz. the public hall of audience, the dwelling house of the sovereign, and the Imperial harem. At its western entrance formerly stood the famous Chand Darwazah, built of brick and stone in a rich style of Mussalman architecture. It is now verging daily to decay, though its remains are even still magnificent.

'The following inscription in Arabic was found at Goamalti. *It is cut in* the Toghra character of the largest dimensions upon a black stone, the original of which is now in my possession. The inscription will be sufficient to show that both the palace and gateway were the works of a powerful and munificent prince:

الحمد لله ذى الالاء والمنن * رب تنزه عن نوم وعن وسن *
ثم الصلوة على المختار من مضر * خير الانام النبى السيد المدن *
محمد خاتم الرسل الكرام ومن * لولاه سبيل الهدى والحق لم تبن *
واله معدن التقوى وصحبة * التابعى الله في سر وفي علن *
وبعد من اتى علىٰ جوار رحمة * اذ راى بجود السحاب الهاطل الهتن *
السلطان امان الدنيا وركن الدين * سلطاننا باربك شاه العالي الفتن *
ابن سيد الذى شاع في الامصار * سلطان محمود شاه العادل الحسن *
هل سلطان العراقين في مركرم * كباربك شاه في الشام في اليمن *
كلّا فما في بلاد الله قط له * البخل و الجود و هذا واحد الزمن *
داره كالجنان راتق نزه * و مجلب للمغني وتد من السجن *

BÁIS GAJÍ WALL.

SECTION OF BÁIS GAJÍ WALL.

نهر جری تحتها کالسلسبیل * اجالها فاز بالفقراء و المحسن *
و بابها راحة للروح ریحانا * لذی المحبة واحد کالشنطن *
باب علی السّطِ مشرح اسمه * میانه دروهی و خول خاص لین *
احد و سبعون سنة و الشمانمایة * و ذاك منباه زمان العیشی في الاون *
فالله اسال تخلید دولة * ما غرد الطیر في روض علی الفنن *
دردور سلطنة شاه جهان پناه * رکن الدنیا والدین ابو المظفر *
سلطان باربك شاه خَلَدَ الله * ملکه و سلطانه بنای میانه در *
سنة احدی و سبعون * و ثمان مایة شده *

'Praise be unto God who is the lord of grace and of benefits, God who neither slumbers nor sleeps.

'Let thanksgiving also be offered to Muhammad, the most excellent of created beings, the chosen, the seal of the Prophets, who by his coming manifested the path of Truth and Justice to the nations.

'And blessings be on his descendants, who are the foundation of the right way.

'And upon his Companions, who are equally desirous of God openly or secretly.

'Afterwards to him who reposeth on the mercy of the Most High. The Prince, scattering the seeds of beneficence and diffusing the waters of gladness; the Sultan, protection of the universe, pillar of religion, the illustrious Bárbak Sháh, son of the most esteemed Sayyid, exemplary to the nations, Sultán Mahmúd Sháh, model of justice, equally renowned with the princes of the two Iraks, of Syria and Arabia, yielding to none of the princes of the earth in generosity and liberality, without an equal, a Prince whose habitation resembles Paradise, whose palace is the refuge of the unfortunate.

'Behold a reservoir of water, flowing under the palace, resembling the waters of Paradise whose streams afford consolation to the afflicted.

'Within this abode is soul refreshing rest, delightful as the fragrance of the sweet basil.

'A gateway also adjoining to the reservoir was erected by the same prince. It is the middle gateway leading to the interior of the royal palace in the year of the Hijrah 871, in the commencement of the auspicious reign.

'For ever let us pray to the Almighty for the prosperity of this monarch, so long as the feathered tribe shall warble forth their notes in this garden.

'In the reign of the Sultán, asylum of the world, pillar of the universe and of religion, the victorious monarch Sultán Bárbak Sháh, whose power and dominion may God perpetuate (A.H. 871, A.D. 1466).'—A. G.

Qadam Rasúl Mosque.

East of the palace stands the Qadam Rasúl Mosque, so called from its containing a stone impressed with the footprint of the Prophet Muhammad, which is said to have been brought from Medína by Husain Sháh, himself a descendant of the Prophet. During the reign of Nawáb Sirájuddaulah it was carried off, but was restored to its original place by Mír Jafar. The building is in good repair, covered by a single dome, with small minarets at the four corners, but its enclosures are somewhat dilapidated. It is still much resorted to by pilgrims, and owing to the reverence in which it is held no spoliation is allowed by the Maulawí who has the Prophet's footprint under his special care. This appears to be the only mosque in Gaur guarded in like manner.

The mosque was built by Nuçrat Sháh, A.H. 937 (A.D. 1530). The following inscription is engraved on a slab of hornblende over the centre doorway:—

(*Vide* Facsimile, No. 23, Plate 57.)

قال الله تعالى من جاء بالحسنة فله عشر امثالها * بنى هذه الصفة المطهرة وحجرها التى فيه اثر قدم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم السلطان المعظم المكرم السلطان بن السلطان ناصر الدنيا و الدين ابو المظفر نصرتشاه السلطان بن حسين شاه السلطان بن سيد اشرف الحسينى خلد الله ملكه و سلطانه و اعلى امره و شانه فى سنه سبع و ثلثين و تسعماية *

'God Almighty says, He who brings the good deed, will be rewarded tenfold. This pure dais and its stone, on which is the footprint of the Prophet—May God bless him!—were put up by the great generous king, the son of a king, Náçiruddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Nuçrat Sháh, the king, son of Husain Sháh, the king, son of Sayyid Ashraf ul-Husainí,—May God perpetuate his kingdom and rule, and elevate his condition and dignity! In the year 937 A.H. (A.D. 1530-31.).'

QADAM RASÚL MOSQUE

Entrance to Court of Qadam Rasúl Mosque.

On the northern gate of the court in which the mosque stands there is an inscription on a black slab, dated 885 A.H. (1480 A.D.). This has evidently been removed from its original place, and is thought to have belonged to a mosque, not far distant, now in entire ruins.

(*Vide* No. 6, Plate 48.)

قال النّبىّ صلّى اللّه عليه و سلّم من بنى مسجدا للّه بنى اللّه تعالى له سبعين قصرا فى الجنّة * بنى هذا المسجد فى عهد السّلطان ابن السّلطان بن السّلطان باربک شاه السّلطان بن محمود شاه السّلطان * بنى هذا المسجد خان اعظم و خاقان معظم * * * بتاريخ دهم ماه مبارک رمضان سنه خمس و ثمانين و ثمانمايه *

'The Prophet, &c., &c., [as before]. This mosque was built in the reign of the king, the son of a king who was the son of a king, Shamsuddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Yúsuf Sháh, the king, son of Bárbak Sháh, the king, son of Mahmúd Sháh, the king. The mosque was built by the great Khán, the exalted Kháqán, ... [not legible.]

'Dated, the 10th day of the blessed month of Ramazán, 885.'*

* Major Francklin describes this mosque as sixteen feet in height and thirty-five feet in length, and as having been formerly flanked with four minarets of black marble, of which three had in his time been carried away.

'The front of the building consists of three arches of stone, faced with compartments of brick, and decorated with flower work extending along the whole façade.

'In the verandah of the mosque is a small slab of blue marble, containing a Persian couplet giving an account of the burial of a Muhammadan saint, with the date of his interment—A.H. 1071:

چو جارا داد جان پيك از تمنا
بزير پا رسول الله خسپيد
چو تاريخ وفاتش جستم از عقل
خرد گفتا مئي رحمت بنوشيد

'After he had voluntarily resigned his soul to the heavenly messenger, he reposed under the foot of the prophet of God. When I studiously enquired the date of his death, a voice replied, Drink the wine of mercy.' The date is contained in the two last words.

ENTRANCE TO COURT OF QADAM RASÚL MOSQUE.

Besides the Nuçrat Sháh inscription of A.H. 937, Major Francklin gives another of Husain Sháh, d. 909, as follows:

بنى هذا الباب في عهد السلطان العادل سيد السادات منبع السعادات خليفة الله بالحجة
و البرهان غوث الاسلام و المسلمين علاء الدنيا والدين ابو المظفر شاه حسين السلطان بن
سيد اشرف الحسينى خلد الله ملكه و سلطانه في الثاني والعشرين من شهر محرم سنة
تسع تسعماية يعنى تاريخ بست دويم شهر محرم

'This gateway was erected in the reign of the most illustrious, the most learned, and the most just Sultán, lord of purity, follower of happiness, Vicegerent of God in the indubitable testimony, the support of Islam and of Moslems, 'Alaudduniya wa uddin Abul Muzaffar Sháh Husain Sultán bin Sayyid Ashraf ul-Husainí, whose dominion may God perpetuate. Dated 22nd of month of Muharram, A.H. 909.'

Francklin describes this inscription as lying on the ground near a gateway of this mosque, to which it is far more likely to belong than the Yúsaf Sháh inscription, which Mr. Ravenshaw seems to have found in its place.

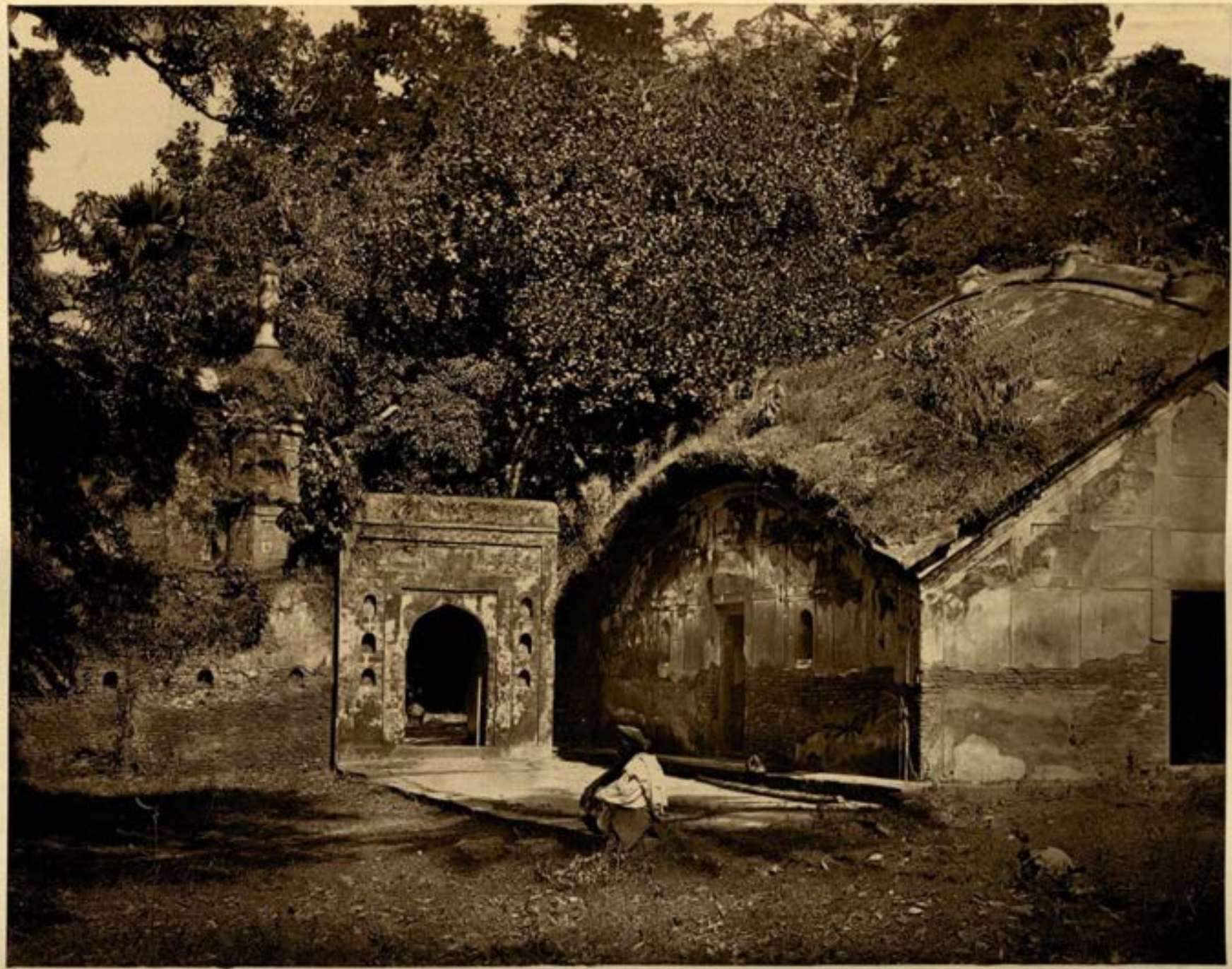
I see that in Mr. Blochmann's numbered list of Husain Sháh's inscriptions (J.B.A.S. 1873, Part i., p. 292), he refers in a note to one of A.H. 909 from Gaur, published in Glazier's Report on Rangpore, 1873, p. 108. Not having that report at hand, I cannot be certain that this is not identical with Major Francklin's.

Outside of the mosque, near the gate, Major Francklin found the text of the Qorán نصر من الله etc., already cited in the note to p. 8.—A. G.

Fath Khán's Tomb.

Several other mosques and tombs, for the most part in complete ruin, are found in this vicinity. The tomb of Fath Khán is still identifiable, but of the more imposing structure, figured as Husain Sháh's tomb by Creighton, nothing now remains.*

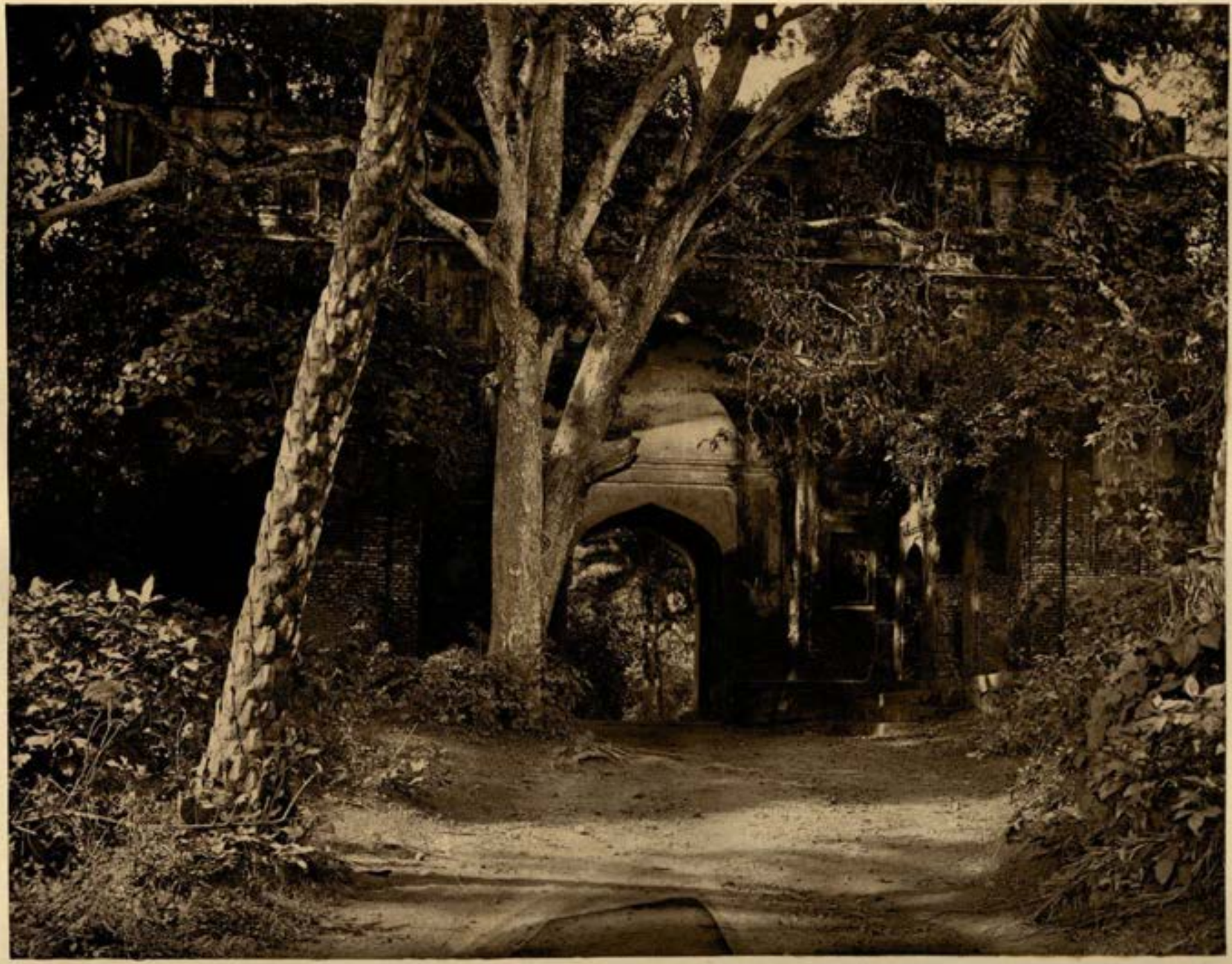
* Major Francklin's description bears out the drawing of the tomb made by Creighton, who tells us that even in Orme's day British engineers had largely 'utilized' its ruins. Major Francklin says: 'You enter by a handsome arched gateway built of stone, the sides and front of which are encrusted with a peculiar kind of composition, blue and white china tiling, which has a singular appearance. At the four corners are large roses cut in the stone. The minarets which flank the building are ornamented with curious carved work of trees, flowers, etc. Within the doorway is a large enclosure (containing the bodies of Sháh Sultán Husain and other members of the royal family,) . . . . . the sides of which are encrusted with the same kind of blue and white composition.'—A. G.



FATH KHÁN'S TOMB.

East Gate of Fort.

Close to the Qadam Rasúl is the eastern gate of the fort, which appears to be of modern construction, and is said to have been built by Suja Sháh, when, long after the desertion of the city, he temporarily returned, and endeavoured to revive it. Apparently this gate was connected by a bridge with a road leading to the palace. It is built of brick and stone, and is the only ruin in Gaur showing any trace of plaster. Not many yards south of this is another gate, or rather domed erection, said to have been the private entrance to the fort. It led directly to the jail, a part of which, with some underground dungeons, is still to be seen.



EAST GATE OF FORT.

Minár.

On passing out of the fort by the eastern gate, a fine minár is seen about half a mile to the north. Though locally believed by some to have been the residence of a saint named Pír Aʼysa, who dwelt on its summit, it was doubtless built for the purpose of summoning the faithful to prayers. Stewart says that it was constructed by Malik Indíl, the Abyssinian, who mounted the throne under the title of Fírúz Sháh II., 893 A.H. (1488 A.D.). The minár has a spiral staircase, which is about 80 feet high, leading to a small apartment at the top, which was covered with a dome, now fallen in. Some remarkable Hindú carvings, apparently representing a boar hunt, were discovered on the door sills and lintels.*

* 'The height of the building is from 70 to 80 (feet), built of stone and brick; it is 32 feet round. The base of the column is of coarse marble. The door through which you enter is of blue stone, and the front of it is decorated with three large roses cut in stone. The pillars that support the doorway are of brick, curiously ornamented with flower work. On entering the building you ascend to the summit by a flight of stone steps, 73 in number, to the cupola at the top, though now in a dilapidated state. The exterior of this column was formerly adorned with bands of marble which encompassed the whole; these have long since been destroyed, but a part of the column, which had been formerly coped with the blue and white tiling before described, is still visible.

'The following fragment of an inscription found at Gomalty, together with a translation, corresponds with the titles borne by the King Feeroz Shah who erected it. The inscription is cut in the Toghra characters, nine inches in length each letter:

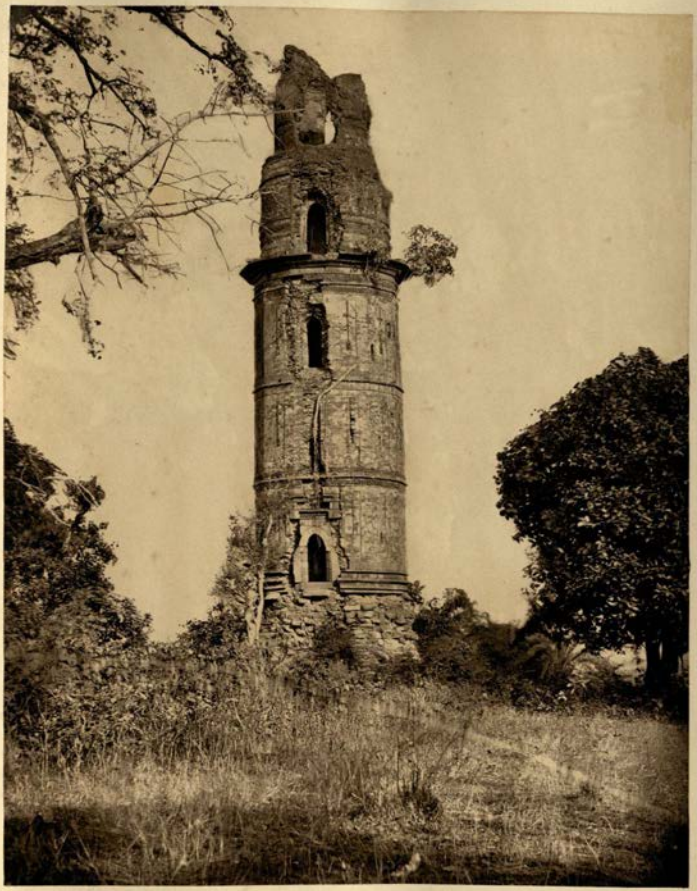
المويد الدنيا والدين المجاهد في سبيل الله خليفه الرحمن السلطان بالحجة والبرهان سيف الدنيا والدين

'Strength of religion and of the world, the warrior in the path of God, the most merciful Vicegerent of God, the Sooltan of the indubitable testimony (*i.e.* the unity of God), SAIFUDDUNYA WADDIN.' —Major Francklin's MS. Report.

The inscription, imperfect as it is, suffices to identify the Sultan described as Saifuddin Abul Muzaffar Fírúz Sháh (II.), No. 18 of Blochmann's List of Bengal Kings. See Journ. B.A.S. vol. xlii. part i. p. 287. Stewart, in his History, had already, on the strength of the Riyáz Ussulátín, assigned the construction of this minár to the same king under the name of Sultán Fírúz Sháh Habshí.

It is to be observed, however, that the fragmentary inscription was not found in its place on the minár, but in Gomáltí factory, which is four miles to the north of it. Francklin introduces it on the assurance that it belonged to the minár, and because it supports the tradition accepted by the Riyáz Ussulátín—a work it is true of modern composition (1787 A.D.), but compiled by a Munshí who, as Stewart tells us, 'took considerable pains to ascertain the dates of the inscriptions on the different buildings.' We know too that the short reign—A.D. 893–895—of this Abyssinian usurper was marked by the 'strict justice' of his rule and by 'his munificent liberality.'

Francklin's inscription is probably that referred to by Mr. Fergusson in his description of this minár (History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, p. 550), but its purport does not bear out this eminent archæologist in assigning the construction of the minár to Shamsuddín Fírúz Sháh, who reigned in Western Bengal A.H. 702–722, or more than a century and a half earlier.—A. G.



MINÁR.

Tántipára Mosque.

A short mile from the minár we meet the government road, which carries us south to numerous other ruins, among which the Tántipára, or Weavers' Mosque, is perhaps the most conspicuous. It is half fallen down, but what is left is elegantly and profusely ornamented with embossed bricks. The interior is supported by massive stone pillars, and some elegantly carved prayer niches occupy the western side. There is no clear proof of its date, but a stone inscription said to have been taken from it mentions Yúsuf Sháh.*

* This alleged inscription can, I think, be identified with the following, which Major Francklin copied from a mosque 'called Mahájan Tolah, adjoining the Lattan Masjid, and of the same kind of architecture.'

قد بنى هذا المسجد الجامع السلطان الاعظم المعظم شمس الدين والدنيا ابو المظفر يوسف شاه ابن باربك السلطان بن محمود شاه السلطان خلد الله ملكه و سلطانه في التاريخ غره محرم سنه ثمانين و ثمان مايه

'This mosque was erected by the most illustrious monarch, the sun of religion, and the world, Sultán Yúsuf Sháh, son of Bárbak Sháh Sultán, son of Mahmúd Sháh Sultán, whose dominion may God perpetuate! Erected on the first day of the month Muharram, A.H. 880.'

A reference to the map will show Mahájantolah to be about half a mile to the N.E. of the Tántipára Mosque, to which no allusion is made in Francklin's Report. Creighton's map also gives Mahájantolah, but without any indication of a mosque there. The Tántipára mosque is the only one near the Lattan mosque.

On the other hand, the date of the above inscription corresponds with that which, in the brief remark appended to Creighton's drawing of the Painted or Lattan Mosque, is assigned to the latter. He assigns A.H. 885 or A.D. 1480 to the Tántipára Mosque, on the testimony of 'an inscription *found near*.' The text of this inscription not being given, it does not admit of being identified with our facsimile, No. 6, Plate 48, which now stands on the northern gate of the Qadam Rasúl Mosque, described above at p. 22; but Mr. Ravenshaw states that this last has evidently been removed from some other place, and it *may* therefore have come from Tántipára.—A. G.

TÁNTIPÁRA MOSQUE.

Lattan Mosque.

Not far from the last-named mosque, to the south, stands the Lattan or Painted Mosque, which is ornamented throughout with encaustic tiles of different vivid colours, admirably arranged for effect. The exterior has been much worn away, but most of the interior is still intact. It is covered by one large dome; this also is supposed to have been built by Yúsuf Sháh.*

* This mosque, which he calls the Nathu or Dancing Girl's Mosque, seems to have struck Francklin more than any other building in Gaur. 'It is,' he says, '60 feet broad, and from the pavement to the summit of the cupola is 40 feet in height. The whole exterior is adorned with the most beautiful tile work of variegated colours, consisting of very dark blue, yellow, green and white tiles, resembling marble. Eight double minarets, made of brick and encrusted with variegated tile work of fanciful architecture, support the building on the outside, extending to the base of the domes. The entrance is through a very superb arched verandah, 35 feet in height, 36 feet in breadth, and 50 feet in length, including the dome. It is surmounted by three domes, the interiors of which are entirely faced with variegated tiling. From this verandah you enter the body of the building, which is a square of 36 feet, crowned at the top with a Syrian roof, and consists of twelve several divisions, having arched doorways supported by as many pillars of black stone of very ancient architecture.

'These pillars, though of slender dimensions, afford a most wonderful and solid support to the stupendous dome overhanging. The pillars are 10 feet high by 172 feet in breadth. The inside of these arched doorways are faced throughout with tile work, which, though of great age, still preserves in many places its original liveliness of colour. The facing of the arch is composed of bricks wedged into the roof lengthways, or, what is more properly termed by builders, dovetailed. The six centre arches are of dark blue and white, the other six are alternately diversified with blue, white, green, and yellow tiling. The whole of the inner surface of this building is faced with the same kind of tiling up to the base of the dome, from whence a series of most beautiful inlaid and enamelled work extends to the summit. Near the top are two circular borders of blue and white enamelled work. The fronts of the arched doorways are executed with great taste, and have, besides a profusion of the tile work above mentioned, corresponding roses of carved brick work over the plinths of the doors.

'In the centre of the western hall is a magnificent arch, in which is placed the Kibla or niche where prayers were performed according to the Mohammedan ritual. . . . . The arch is decorated within with much taste, having a profusion of carved foliage and trellis work. On each side of this niche are corresponding recesses in the wall, to preserve the uniformity of the building. The diameter of the lower circle of the dome is 60 feet.

'There was formerly an inscription at the eastern entrance of the mosque, placed over the doorway, which has been taken out and carried away. In front of this entrance is a spacious basin of excellent water, it is 580 feet in circumference. . . . .

'This elegant mosque is said to have been erected by a dancing girl, once perhaps the favourite of her sovereign. . . . . It must be acknowledged by every one who has viewed it, even in its present ruinous state, to have been a building of much taste and splendour. I have not myself met with anything superior to it for elegance of style, lightness of construction, or tasteful decoration in any part of Upper Hindustan.'

In his official report on the remaining ruins of Gaur, dated 29th March, 1875 (Proceedings B.A.S. 1875, p. 93), Mr. King, the Officiating Collector of Máldah, says that 'the Lattan Mosque, even in its present state, has a pleasing effect as a whole,' but that the fallen bricks have been spoiled by lying on the ground, 'and give no fair impression of the structure.'—A. G.

LATTAN OR PAINTED MOSQUE.

Kotwálí Gate.

Two miles further down the road brings us to the southern rampart of the city, through which the road passes, under a magnificent archway known as the Kotwálí Gate. It is fifty-one feet under the arch, and was provided with a semicircular abutment on either side, for the military guard on duty. Even in its present ruined state, this gateway is one of the most imposing sights in Gaur; tamarind trees overhang it on all sides, while large pipal trees may be observed springing from the centre of its walls.*

The small Ságar Dighí lies north and east from the Kotwálí Gate, and is within the ramparts. This fine piece of water, though not so large as its namesake in the northern division, averages 1000 yards long by 400 broad, and is much more easy of approach. Its banks are beautifully wooded, yet not so densely as to preclude a view from all sides, and its water is entirely free from weeds, owing, probably, to the bottom of the tank having been laid down in sand. This reservoir was the main water supply to the palace and fort, as is evident from the remains of several aqueducts.

On some rising ground on the north bank are the ruins of a quadrangular building, said to have been the Madrasah or college. A double row of columns on the four sides alone remain to mark its situation. These are of elegant shape and considerable size, and are remarkable for their materials, which consist of granite and marbles different in character from those found in any other part of Gaur.†

* Mr. King, in his report already cited, refers to an inscription of Mahmúd Sháh, dated A.H. 860, as lying 'on the road side less than a mile off,' which may have belonged to this gate. Mr. Blochmann, again, has published (J.B.A.S. vol. xliv. Pt. 1, p. 289) a short inscription taken from inside the gate, recording the construction of a bridge in the reign of the same king in A.H. 862. This bridge must, Mr. Blochmann thinks, be the bridge of five arches near the Gate. In Major Francklin's time it was 'regularly paved with brick, with stones underneath.'—A. G.

† It seems probable that Husain Sháh was its founder. See Inscription No. 10 of Blochmann's Contributions, No. II. J.B.A.S. vol. xliii. Pt. 1, p. 303, reproduced in Plate 51 of this work.—A. G.

KOTWÁLÍ GATE.

Fírúzpúr Gate.

Passing through the Kotwálí Gate we now proceed to the environs south of the ramparts. Prostrate domes, mingled with carved lintels, and innumerable bricks, are seen lying in confusion on all sides, and show how dense must have been the population of this suburb. We traverse the eastern bank of another magnificent reservoir, known as the Ballo Dighí; it is 500 yards long by 200 broad.

Two miles further on we reach the endowment of Fírúzpúr. A lofty brick gateway leads to the house of the saint Nyámatullah, whose descendants still live there. It is on the bank of a large tank; there is also a small plain mosque, and a fine domed building, raised as a tomb over the remains of the saint, and endowed with land yielding 6000 rupees a year. Other tombs surround the latter, and several inscriptions have been collected by the owners of the endowment. One of these is as follows:

قال الله تعالى انّ المساجد لله * بانىٔ هذا الباب خانجهان في تاريخ غرّة من ذو الحجة سنه سبعين و تسعماية *

'God Almighty says, "Surely the Mosques belong to God." The builder of this gateway is Khanjahan. On the 1st Zul-Hajja, 970 (22nd July, 1563).'

Sháh Nyámatullah died a century later or in 1080 A.H. (1669 A.D.), subsequent to the desertion of Gaur, but probably before it fell into utter ruin.

FÍRÚZPÚR GATE.

Small Golden Mosque.

South-east of the endowment, and about half a mile distant, stands the Small Golden Mosque, which is in better preservation than most of the Gaur ruins. It might be termed the gem of Gaur. The courtyard, however, is entirely demolished, a road now passing through it. The mosque is oblong in form and covered with fifteen domes, supported on massive hornblende pillars, of which substance the entire mosque is constructed. The exterior facings are chased with the most elegant and elaborate designs, while the interior is beautifully chiselled on all sides; in the north-west corner stands a carved throne or 'takht.' The inscription over the centre door is complete, except one corner, and that a most important one, as it contained the date. It tells us however it was built by Wálí Muhammad, during the reign of Husain Sháh.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم قال الله تعالى انّما يعمد مساجد الله من آمن بالله واليوم آلاض واقام الصلوة وآتى الزكوة ولم يخش الا الله فعسى اولئك يكونوا من المهتدين * وقال النبى صلى الله عليه وسلم من بنى مسجدا لله بنى الله له بيتا مثله فى الجنّة * وعمارة هذا المسجد الجامع فى عهد سلطان السلاطين سيد السادات منبع السعادات رحيم المسلمين والمسلمات معلى كلمات الحق والحسنات المويّد بتائيد الديان المجاهد فى سبيل الرحمٰن خليفة الله بالحجّه و البرهان غوث الاسلام و المسلمين علاء الدنيا والدين ابو المظفر حسين شاه السلطان الحسينى خلد الله ملكه و سلطانه بُنِىَ هذا المسجد الجامع خالصًا مخلصًا متوكّلا على الله لولى محمّد بن على المخاطب بخطاب مجلس المجالس منصور نصره الله تعالىٰ فى الدنيا وآلاخرة وتاريخه الميمون الرابع عشرمن شهر الله المبارك رجب رجب قدره سنه - - - - - - - - *

"In the name of God, the clement and the merciful! God Almighty says, 'Surely, he will build the mosques of God who believes in God and the last day, and establishes the prayer and offers alms and fears no one but God. And such perhaps belong to those that are guided.' And the Prophet —may God bless him!—says, 'He who builds a mosque for God, will have a house like it built for him by God in Paradise.' The erection of this Jámi' Masjid took place during the reign of the king of kings, the Sayyid of the

SMALL GOLDEN MOSQUE. EAST VIEW.

SMALL GOLDEN MOSQUE.

Sayyids, the fountain of auspiciousness, who has mercy on Moslem men and women, who exalts the words of truth and good deeds, who is assisted by the assistance of the Supreme Judge, who strives on the road of the Almighty, the vicegerent of God with proof and testimony, the keeper of Islam and the Moslems, 'Alá-uddunyá waddín Abul-Muzaffar Husain Sháh, the king, the descendant of the Prophet—may God perpetuate his kingdom and his rule. This Jámi' Mosque was built, from pure and sincere motives and from trust in God, by Walí Muhammad, son of 'Alí, who has the title of Majlis-ul-Majális Mansúr—may God render him victorious in this world and the next! Its auspicious date is the 14th day of God's blessed month of Rajab — may its value increase! . . . ." (year broken away.)

The Taksal Dighí, or tank of the Mint, is worthy of a visit, though there is no longer any trace of the building to which it belonged.*

* This relic of a Mint in the Firúzpúr suburb of Gaur is interesting in its bearing on the identification of the Firúzábád Mint which was in use for Bengal coinage from A.H. 742 to A.H. 799. See Thomas's 'Initial Coinage of Bengal,' J.B.A.S. vol. xxxvi. part i. p. 73. In his 'Chronicles of the Pathán Kings,' 1871, p. 151, the same author identifies Firúzábád with Paṇḍuah, citing in a note Mr. Blochmann's paper in J.B.A.S., 1870, p. 120, which described the Antiquities of Paṇḍuah in the District of Hughlí.—A. G.

Ornamental Bricks.

These specimens, so frequently mentioned in the foregoing pages as embossed bricks, will give a fair idea of the exterior ornamentation on most of the Gaur buildings. By a close examination of Plates 2 and 3, their original places may approximately be assigned to them. The Dákhil Gate and Qadam Rasúl Mosque are ornamented in the same style; and from the latter most of the patterns formerly employed in quilting on Máldah silk were derived.* On the Tántipára Mosque these bricks are combined with coloured encaustic tiles, which are the chief characteristic of the Lattan Mosque, where embossed bricks, generally in the shape of large roses, are only found over portals and arches. Coloured tiles are also to be seen in the *débris* of Husain Sháh's tomb, the Chánd and Ním Gates, and the domed erection adjoining the Eastern Gate of the Fort. On the Small Golden Mosque the embossed workmanship is extremely delicate, in black polished stone. The Large Golden Mosque is also faced with the same stone, highly polished, but with no traces of embossed work on the ruin as it now stands, though Creighton, in his Illustration, gives the whole front of the building the same ornamentation as its smaller namesake.

* See Mr. Blochmann's note, J.B.A.S. vol. xliii. part i. p. 303, where Grant's Report is cited to show how, in the early days of our revenue administration, the right to dismantle Gaur of its 'enamelled bricks' was farmed out to the landholders of the district.—A. G.

ORNAMENTAL BRICKS.

CHAPTER III.

MÁLDAH AND PAṆḌUAH.*

THE cities of Máldah and Paṇḍuah being closely connected with Gaur in situation and historical association, a short description of their ruins may here be found interesting.

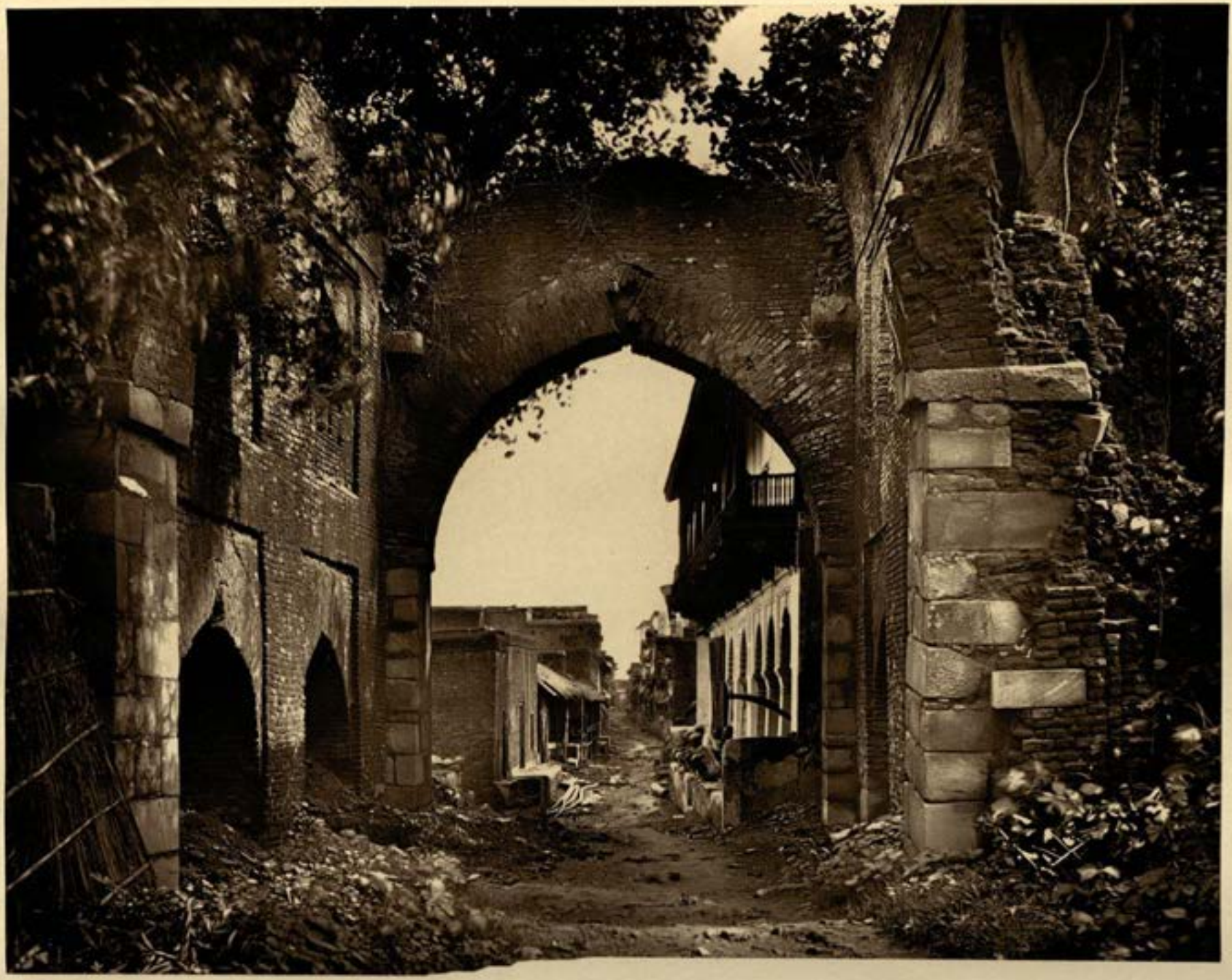
Standing on the east bank of the river Mahánandá, about two miles north of Angrezábád, is the old city of Máldah, a place at one time of some commercial importance. To distinguish it from the neighbouring civil station it is often called Old Máldah, a designation to which it is well entitled by its ruined mosques, gateways, and other remains of antiquity. On the opposite bank, at Níma Sarái, where the Kalindrí river joins the Mahánandá, stands a curious tower with stone projections jutting from its walls on all sides. Tradition says that this was an alarm tower, on which fires were lighted in times of danger or invasion, to give timely notice to the city of Gaur.

* Paṇḍuah پنڈوہ or পাণ্ডুয়া locally called Parruah, the nasal *ṇ* being omitted and the *ḍ* changed to *r*. Blochmann says that the inhabitants of Paṇḍuah of the Hugli District speak of this city as بڑا پنڈوہ 'the greater Paṇḍuah.'—Proceedings B.A.S. 1870, p. 121.—A. G.

Máldah Fort Gate.

The Katrah or Fort Gate stands near the river, and leads to a strong enclosure, which appears, of late years, to have been used as a Sarái or resting place for travellers. It is said to have answered formerly as a place of safety for valuable merchandise landed at Old Máldah, and intended for transmission to the Court at Panduah. Towards the south end of the city there are the ruins of a second gateway, which appears of much more modern construction than the Fort Gate.

GATE OF FORT.



SOUTH GATE OF CITY.

Golden Mosque, Máldah.

The Fautí or 'Burial Mosque,' and several others, lie scattered about in ruins. The finest of these remains are those of the Sóna Masjid or Golden Mosque, which has an inscription over the door, giving the year A.H. 974 (A.D. 1566) as the date of its erection. It was built by a merchant named M'asúm, whose brother built the caravanserai close by.

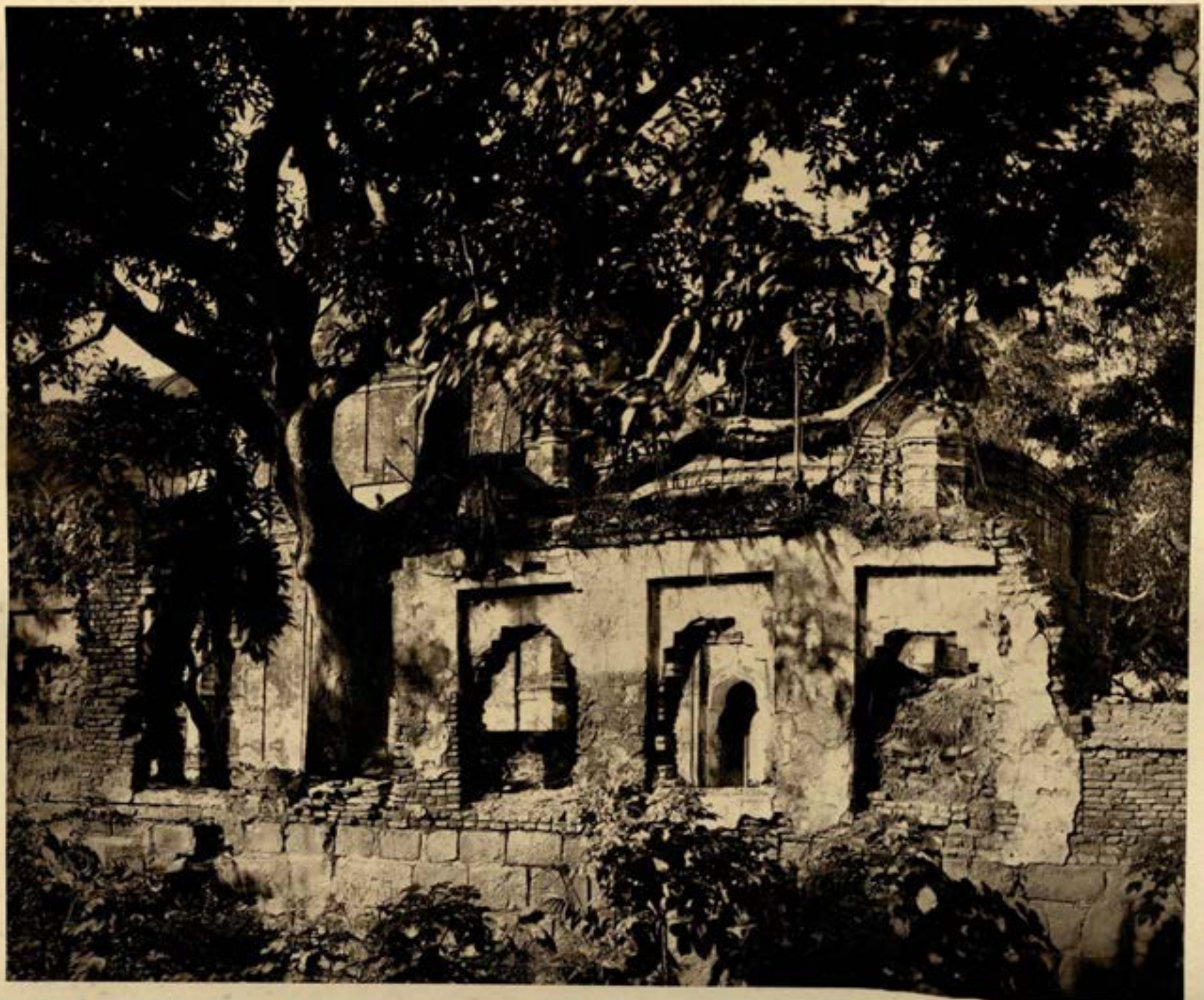
این قبله که در عالم معلوم اید درهند بنام کعبه موسوم آمد چون ثاني کعبه بود تاریخ
از غیب بیت الله الحرام معصوم امد

'This place of worship became known in the world and was called in India by the name of Kaaba. As it was the second Kaaba, the date is disclosed in Byt Allah Al-harám M'asúm (=974 A.H.).'

A ride of seven miles from Máldah brings us to Panduah, which city seems to have been occasionally resorted to by the Kings of Bengal, and was certainly at one time the actual capital of the kingdom. Though it cannot boast of such antiquity as Gaur, its remains afford stronger evidence than do those of the latter city of its having been constructed mainly from the materials of Hindú buildings.

Panduah must have been about six miles in length, but very narrow, not exceeding a mile, probably, in its widest part. Like Gaur, it is covered with innumerable tanks, some of great age, and nearly all of them having their greatest length from north to south, as evidence of their Hindú origin. The central street was paved throughout with bricks, and an aqueduct connected with the river Mahánandá is said to have run through the middle of it.

The whole place is now deserted, and the public road passes through a country even more impracticable than Gaur. The dense forest on both sides is so infested with tigers that single travellers never venture on the road at night. A gang of two hundred men were employed to clear away the jungle while the present illustrations were being taken, and even with their assistance an attempt to secure a general view of the great Adínah Mosque had to be abandoned.



OUTER WALL OF GOLDEN MOSQUE.

The first object reached on this road is a plain archway on the right leading to the endowment of Báishazárí or 22,000, the name designating the number of bighas of land which constitute the endowment of the tomb of the saint Makhdúm Sháh Jalál Tabrízí. Within this gateway stands the endowment, about a quarter of a mile distant. The building is poor, consisting of a simple mosque with a court-yard, and a small but substantially-built tank, faced on all sides with masonry. The mosque bears the following inscription:

چو این عالی عمارت یافت ترتیب * شده تاریخ روشن آستان باد سنه ۱۰۷۵

'When this high edifice was erected, the chronogram was "May the Mausoleum be bright!" A.H. 1075 (A.D. 1664).'

The two inscriptions which follow seem to record certain additions made to the buildings of the endowment by pious worshippers of the saint.

یا منعم یا منتقم

وتتم بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم بالخیر

جلال الدین شه تبریز مولد * که در مدحش زبانها شد گهرریز

برایش چاند خان کرد این عمارت * که او از عرض اخلاص است لبریز

اگر پرسند که بود جلوه فرما * درین معمار بنیاد صفا ریز

دهن را شست وشوده همچوساحر * پس آنکه با زبان معنی انگیز

جوابش در لباس سال تاریخ * بگو شاه جلال الدین تبریز

'O Benefactor! O Avenger! In the name of God, the clement, the merciful! May it end well! Sháh Jalál-uddín, who was born at Tabríz (is a saint), to whose praise all tongues utter pearls. For his sake Chánd Khán erected this building; for he is full of sincere motives. If people ask who dwells in this bright edifice, perform an ablution, as was done by (the poet) Sáhir, and afterwards say in significant language, as an answer for the sake of a chronogram, "Sháh Jalál-uddín of Tabríz, 1084 A.H." (A.D. 1673).'

وتتم بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم بالخير

جلال الدين شه آن مقبول باری * فرشته خوی شاه دین ودنیا
مریدش ساخت سعد الله ازجان * بعالم این بنای راحت افزا
زهی معمور بنیادی که ازوی * خلایق راست تحصیل تمنّا
خرد گفتا چه سان است آن عمارت * که آساید درو پیوسته دلها
سروش غیبتش درگوش دل گفت * بود والا مکان فیض آما
از مصرعهٔ آخر سنه هزار ونود وسه هجری برمی آید *

'In the name of God, the merciful, the clement! May it end well! Jalál uddín Sháh (is) the accepted of God, angelic, the king of religion and the world. His disciple Sad-ullah erected, from pure motives, this rest-giving building on earth. How excellent is a structure through which people attain their wishes. Genius asked, "What kind of building is this in which the hearts of men find for ever rest?" An angel from the unseen world whispered to him, "It is a noble building full of bliss."

'On adding up the letters of the last hemistich, the Hijra year 1093 (A.D. 1682) will be obtained.'

The saint Sháh Jalál-uddín came from Tabríz in Persia to Bengal. He died in 1244 A.D. (642 A.H.). Some say that he died in the Dakhin, and that his shrine near Panduah is a mere imitation *(jawab)*; others say that he died on one of the Maldives, off the south-west coast of India.*

* See J.B.A.S. vol. xlii. part i. p. 260, where Mr. Blochmann has given such particulars as are obtainable regarding the saints of Gaur and Panduah.—A. G.

The Chhye Hazárí, Paṇḍuah.

Proceeding northward from the Báishazárí, we arrive at another smaller endowment, called the Chhye Hazárí (or 6000 bighas), which was founded to commemorate the saint Núr Quṭb 'Álam.

A handsome gateway on the left was the entrance to the saint's dwelling-house. On one of the lintels are shown marks said to be the imprints of the hands, feet, and shoulder, of a Fakír named Makhdúm Dúkarposh, who, the legend says, arrived at the gate hungry and footsore, and not obtaining admittance, fell exhausted against the lintel. South of the house is a large square enclosed space, about 1000 yards in measurement each way, within which are some interesting tombs in good preservation, though not kept up to the full extent of the means of the endowment. These tombs fill the western part of the enclosure, while the eastern part is occupied by a brick tank.

NÚR QUṬB ʾÁLAM GATEWAY.

Tomb of Núr Quṭb 'Álam, Panḍuah.

Among the tombs just referred to, and immediately fronting a small mosque, is that of Núr Quṭb 'Álam, who died, according to the dates preserved in a book belonging to the endowment, A.H. 828 (A.D. 1414). The mosque bears the following inscription:

(*Vide* No. 5, Plate 47.)

قال النّبيّ صلّي الله عليه وسلّم من بني مسجد الله بني الله له قصرا في الجنّة * بنى هذا المسجد فى زمن السّلطان العادل الباذل شمس الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفّر يوسف شاه السّلطان بن باربك شاه السّلطان بن محمود شاه السّلطان خلّد الله ملكه و سلطانه مجلس المجالس مجلس اعلى اعلاه الله تعالى شانُه فى الدّارين وكان ذلك فى التّاريخ هجرة النّبيّ صلّى الله عليه وسلّم فى يوم الجمعة عشرين شهر رجب رُجب قدره سنة اربع و ثمانين و ثمانماية *

'The Prophet (may God's blessing rest upon him!) says, "He who builds a mosque for God, shall have a castle built for him by God in Paradise." This mosque was built in the reign of the just and liberal king Shamsud-dunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Yúsuf Sháh, the king, son of Bárbak Sháh, the king, son of Mahmúd Sháh, the king,—may God perpetuate his kingdom and rule!—by the Majlis ul Majális, the exalted Majlis,—may God whose dignity is exalted also exalt him in both worlds! And this took place on Friday, the 20th Rajab (may the dignity of the month increase!) of the year 884, according to the era of the Flight of the Prophet, upon whom God's blessing rest!'

TOMB OF NÚR QUṬB ʼĀLAM

Tomb of Álá ul Haq, Panḍuah.

Immediately in front of Núr Quṭb's tomb is that of 'Alá-ul-Haq, his father, the date of whose death, gathered from the book above referred to, is A.H. 786 (A.D. 1384). According to biographical works, however, 'Alá-ul-Haq died on the 20th March, 1398 (A.H. 800); and his son Núr Quṭb 'Alam in A.D. 1447 (A.H. 851).*

Over the entrance gate, and close to the tomb of Núr Quṭb 'Alam, is an inscription as follows:

(*Vide* No. 4, Plate 46.)

قال الله تعالىٰ كلّ نفس ذايقة الموت و قال الله تعالىٰ اذ جاء اجلهم فلا يستأخرون ساعة ولا يستقدمون * قال الله تعالىٰ كلّ من عليها فان و يبقى وجه ربّك ذو الجلال و الاكرام * و انتقال مخدومنا العلامة استاد الائمّة برهان الامة شمس الملّة حجّة الاسلام و المسلمين نافع الفقراء و المساكين مرشد الواصلين و المسترشدين من دار الفناء الىٰ دار البقاء الثامن والعشرين من ذى الحجّة فى يوم الاثنين وكان ذٰلك من السّنة الثّالث و السّتّين و ثمانماية فى عهد سلطان السّلاطين حامى بلاد اهل اسلام و المسلمين ناصر الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفّر محمود شاه سلطان صانه الله بالامن و الامان وبنى هذا الروضة خان الاعظم لطيف خان سلّمه من البليات و آلافات *

'God Almighty says, "Every creature tasteth death" (Qor. iii. 182). He also says, "When their fate comes, they cannot delay it an hour, nor anticipate it" (Qor. x. 50). He also says, "Everything on earth fadeth, but the face of thy Lord remaineth full of glory and honour." Our revered master, the teacher of Imáms, the proof of the congregation, the sun of the Faith, the testimony of Islám and of the Muslims, who bestowed advantages upon the poor and the indigent, the guide of saints and of such as wish to be guided, passed away from this transient world to the everlasting mansion, on the 28th Zil Hijjah, a Monday, of the year 863, during the reign of the king of kings, the protector of the countries of the Faithful, Náçiruddunyá waddín

* For such particulars as are known of these saints, father and son, see Mr. Blochmann's paper before cited, J.B.A.S. vol. xlii. part i. pp. 261, 262.—A. G.

TOMB OF ʾALÁ UL HAQ.

Abul Muzaffar Mahmúd Sháh, the king,—may God keep him in safety and security! This tomb was erected by the great Khán, Laṭíf Khán,—may God protect him against evils and misfortunes!'

Whence this inscription came is not known, nor who is the person to whom it was originally inscribed.

On the border of the tank in the enclosure is a tomb of black hornblende,* bearing the following inscription:

الله اکبر

لوح قبر طفل عنایت الله معصوم بن طاهر محمد بن عماد الدین حسن ابن سلطان علی سبزواری نوّر مرقده غرّة رمضان ۱۰۱۷

'God is great! This is the tablet of the tomb of the child 'Ináyat-ullah M'asúm, son of Táhir Muhammad, son of 'Imád-uddín Hasan, son of Sultán 'Ali, of Sabzwár,—may God illuminate his resting place! 1st Ramazán, 1017 (29th November, 1608).'

* It is probable that the 'black hornblende' of Mr. Ravenshaw, and the 'black marble' of Major Francklin, is basalt, which is found in the Rájmahál Hills. See Proceedings B.A.S. 1870, p. 122, note.—A. G.

Sculptured Figure, Panduah.

The interior of the residence of Núr Quṭb 'Álam is in ruin, but contains several marble blocks, one of which, apparently the capital of a column, is six feet nine inches in diameter, and three feet six inches thick, weighing several tons. Broken pillars, cornices, and lintels, carved with great taste, are scattered about on all sides. A curious sculptured figure in black hornblende, bearing somewhat the appearance of a Hindú god, lies apart from any ruin to which it could possibly have belonged.

STONE CAPITAL. FIG 1.

SCULPTURED FIGURE. FIG 2.

CARVED LINTELS.

Golden Mosque, Panḍuah.

North of Quṭb's house stands a small but beautiful mosque, called the Sóna Masjid, or Golden Mosque, built throughout of hornblende. There is a court-yard traceable to the east with a massive gateway. The inscription on the mosque, within which there is a fine pulpit still standing, is as follows:

بنى هذا المسجد شيخ المعظم والمكرم مخدوم شيخ بن محمد الخالدي صاحب مقام
بمقام قطب الا قطاب راس الا صواب مخدوم قطب عالم سخيفه مداله ظل امتع له داله
اثاره المسمي هذا المسجد قطب شاهي وتاريخه مخدوم عبيد راجي سنه ٩٩٠

'The foundation of this mosque was laid by the honourable and venerable Makhdúm Shaikh, son of Muhammad Al-Khalidí, honoured in all places, polestar of the polestars, and source of rectitude. May God extend the shadow of his property, etc. This mosque is the Quṭb Sháhi, and its date is Makhdúm 'Ubed Rájí, A.H. 990.'

Another inscription is found on the gateway as follows:

هذا باب المسجد الذى بنى الفقير الحقير مخدوم شيخ بن محمد الخالدى مكنّس مقام
شمس سماء الشريعة قمر مكان الحقيقة هادى زمرة آدم مخدوم المعظم مخدوم قطب عالم
تلألى الله بمضجعه تاريخه اتممتُ باب مسجد ٩٩٣

'This is the gateway of the mosque which was built by the poor and contemptible Makhdúm Shaikh, son of Muhammad the Khalidí, verger of the domicile of the sun of the heaven of the law and of the moon of the place of truth, of the leader of mankind, the great teacher Makhdúm Quṭb 'Álam, —may God adorn his resting place! Its chronogram lies in the words, "I have completed the door of the mosque," A.H. 993 (A.D. 1585).'*

* Major Francklin gives the following inscription as 'on the front of the Golden Mosque at Panḍuah':

السلطان الاعظم المعظم السلطان ابن السلطان شمس الدنيا و الدين ابو المظفر
السلطان يوسف شاه بن سلطان باربك بن سلطان محمود شاه السلطان خلا الله ملكه
و سلطانه تاريخ يوما لاثنين اربعه عشر في شهر محرم سنه خمس وثمانين و ثمان مائة

'The most illustrious and most esteemed Sultán, son of a Sultán, the sun of the universe and religion, Abul Muzaffar, Yúsuf Sháh, son of Sultán Bárbak, son of Sultán Mahmúd Sháh, whose dominion may God perpetuate! Dated Monday, the 14th of the month of Muharram, A.H. 885.'—A. G.

GOLDEN MOSQUE.

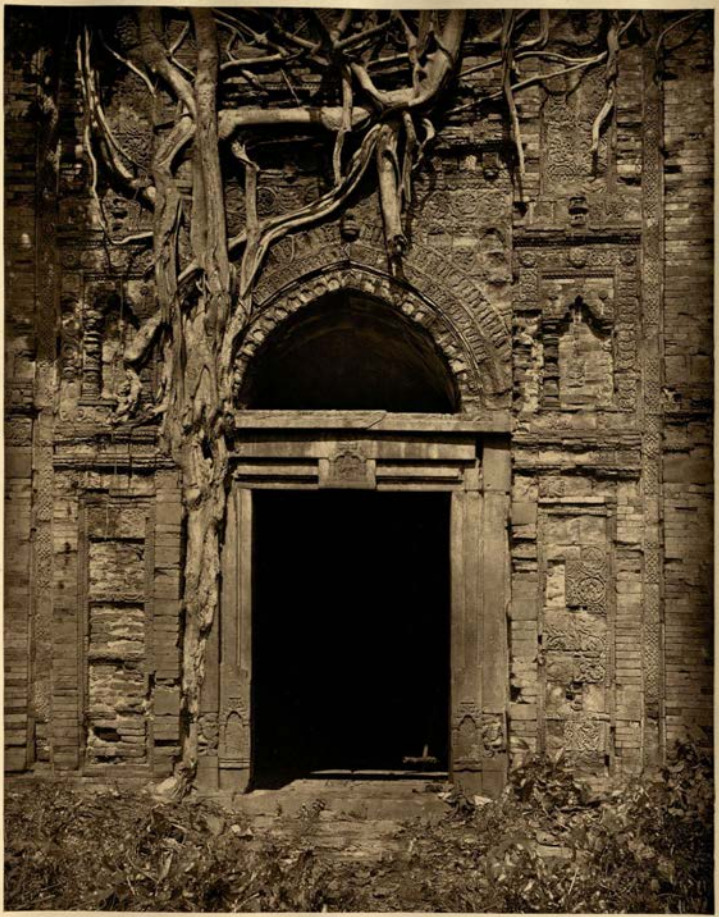
INTERIOR OF GOLDEN MOSQUE.

Eklákhí Mosque, Paṇḍuah.

Proceeding a short distance further on the road, we come upon the tomb of Sultán Ghiyásuddín, known as the Eklákhí Mosque, and built of embossed bricks and hornblende combined. The building is eighty feet square, and covered by one dome. It is believed to contain the remains of Sultán Ghiyásuddín, his wife, and his daughter-in-law.* This tomb is a remarkable instance of the use of Hindú materials in the erection of a Muhammadan mausoleum, for both doorposts and lintels are covered with Hindú carvings. There is no inscription to show the date of erection.

* This can hardly be other than the domed tomb referred to in the Riyáz-us-sulátín as that of Jaláluddín Abul Muzaffar Muhammad Sháh. See Blochmann's Contributions, J.B.A.S. vol. xlii. part i. p. 267. General Cunningham cites this tomb as 'one of the finest specimens of the Bengali Pathan tomb.' Archæological Survey Report, vol. iii. p. 11.—A. G.

EKLÁKHÍ MOSQUE.



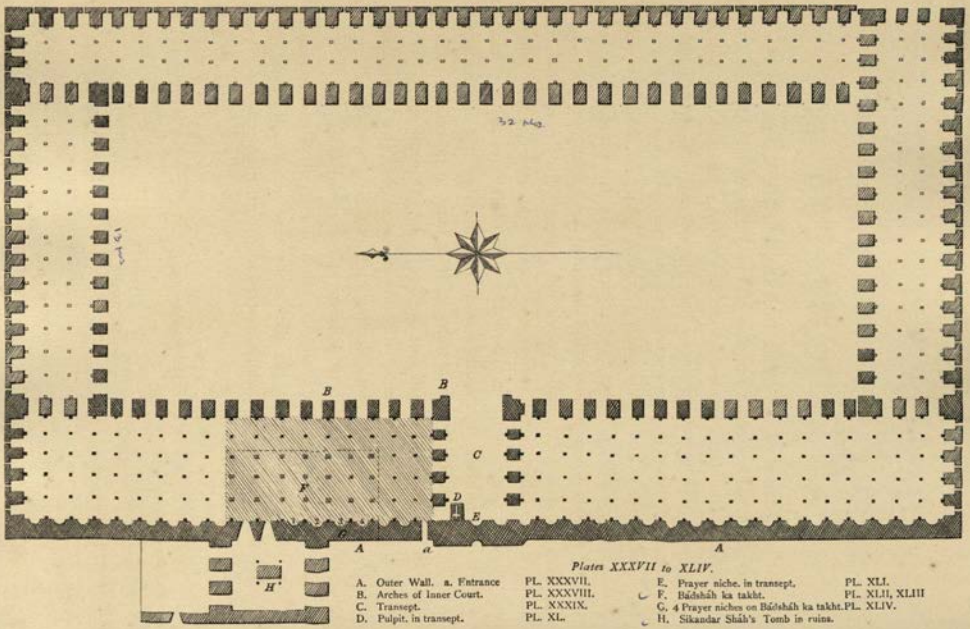
ENTRANCE TO EKLÁKHI MOSQUE.

Adínah Mosque, Panduah.

At a distance of two miles from the Eklákhí Mosque, on the east side of the main road, are the remains of the great Adínah Mosque. This is a quadrangular building, measuring 500 feet from north to south, and 300 from east to west. Though in a ruinous state, the original plan of the building is still traceable, and shows it to have consisted of a series of cloisters opening towards an inner court. The accompanying ground plan * is shaded to mark those portions where pillars, arches, and domes are in fair preservation; a medium shading defines where pillars stand unroofed and outer walls are fast falling to decay; and a faint shade points out where pillars now lie in fragments amongst the fallen domes which they once supported. These pillars, which are of black stone, on the north-western side of the quadrangle, stand in four rows to the number of seventeen in a row, and form the northern portion of a cloister, which, broken by a transept, if it may so be called, extends southward for the whole length of this western wall. The transept (C of the plan) communicates by five arches with the cloisters on either side, and similar cloisters, though of less width, having each but two rows of pillars, surround the quadrangle on its northern, eastern, and southern sides.

All these cloisters originally carried a domed roof, each square of four pillars supporting its dome, but the domes have now for the most part fallen in. Of the ninety domes which covered the northern portion of the western cloister, only forty-five remain.

* This plan differs from Buchanan Hamilton's only in having an additional arch on the south side of the quadrangle.—A. G.



GROUND PLAN OF ADÍNAH MOSQUE.

Outer Wall with Entrance.

The whole length of this wall is faced with black hornblende, of which large blocks also line the sides of the entrance to the interior of the mosque. Except by this entrance, which has the appearance of being a mere slit in the wall some three feet in width, the visitor has no means of access to the inner quadrangle; and it is the small size of the entrance which probably enhances the effect on him of the height of the building, and of the massive character of its pillars and arches. A series of open arches lead into the inner court, some of which on the western side of the quadrangle are still intact. Dense jungle fills this centre space and prevents a general view of the court. The inside of the external walls on the north, south, and east are ornamented with trellis work, while on the west, facing each arch, are prayer niches of black hornblende elaborately sculptured.

On the outer wall appears the following inscription:

(*Vide* Facsimile, No. 1, Plate 45.)

أمر ببناء العمارة هذا المسجد الجا ابا (؟) فى الدّولة السّلطان الاعظم اعلم اعدل اكرم اكمل السّلاطين العرب و العجم الواثق بتائيد الرحمٰن ابو المجاهد سكندر شاه سلطان بن الياس شاه السّلطان خلد خلافته الى يوم الموعود كتبه فى التّاريخ ستّ رجب سنة سبعين و سبعماية *

'This . . . . mosque was ordered to be built in the reign of the great king, the wisest, the justest, the most liberal of the kings of Arabia and Persia, who trusts in the assistance of the Merciful, Abul Mujáhid Sikandar Sháh, the king, son of Ilyás Sháh, the king,—may his reign be perpetuated till the day of promise! He wrote it on the 6th Rajab of the year 770 (14th February, 1369).'

OUTER WALL WITH ENTRANCE TO ADÍNAH MOSQUE

ARCHES OF INNER COURT. ADÍNAH MOSQUE.

The Transept.

That part of the mosque which has been designated as the transept is in a very dilapidated state. The roof has fallen in, but its height must have been eighty feet, and a large tree which has sprung up on one side spreads its branches far above the building, showing the length of time that must have elapsed since the place became a ruin. The transept measures sixty-four feet from east to west, and thirty-two from north to south. In one of its corners stands a beautifully-carved pulpit, below the steps of which a large slab of stone, now fallen, bears the features of a Hindú god on its reverse side. There are two prayer niches elaborately chiselled; the larger one, occupying the centre of the west wall, has an inscription in the Tughrá character.*

* Major Francklin thus describes the Adínah Mosque; some obvious mistakes on the part of his copyist have been corrected:

'This noble building is 500 feet from north to south, and 300 feet from east to west, and 60 feet in height. It was formerly supported by 260 columns of black marble, of which number only 150 now remain. These columns were surmounted by superb cupolas, the whole forming a beautiful Syrian roof, executed with great skill, and tastefully ornamented with carved flower work. A mere description must fall short in attempting to delineate the features of this magnificent pile. It requires the pencil of the artist.

'In the north-western aisle is a raised stone platform 80 feet long by 40 feet broad, and 12 feet high; the beams and arches supporting this platform are likewise of massive stone, and beneath the beams are roses carved with much taste on the same material. This terrace, which was entered by a door from the westward, was appropriated as a place of devotion by the king and his nobility, who thus sat apart from the multitude below in the body of the mosque.

'On the western wall opposite this platform are niches of marble which are beautifully decorated with flower work, and contain the "Kalma," in Arabic, exquisitely sculptured.

'In the centre of the western face of the mosque, and parallel with the entrance above described, is the grand public "Kiblah," beautifully sculptured in black marble, on which is a profusion of flower work. Above this, at a high elevation on the wall, is the prayer of invocation—

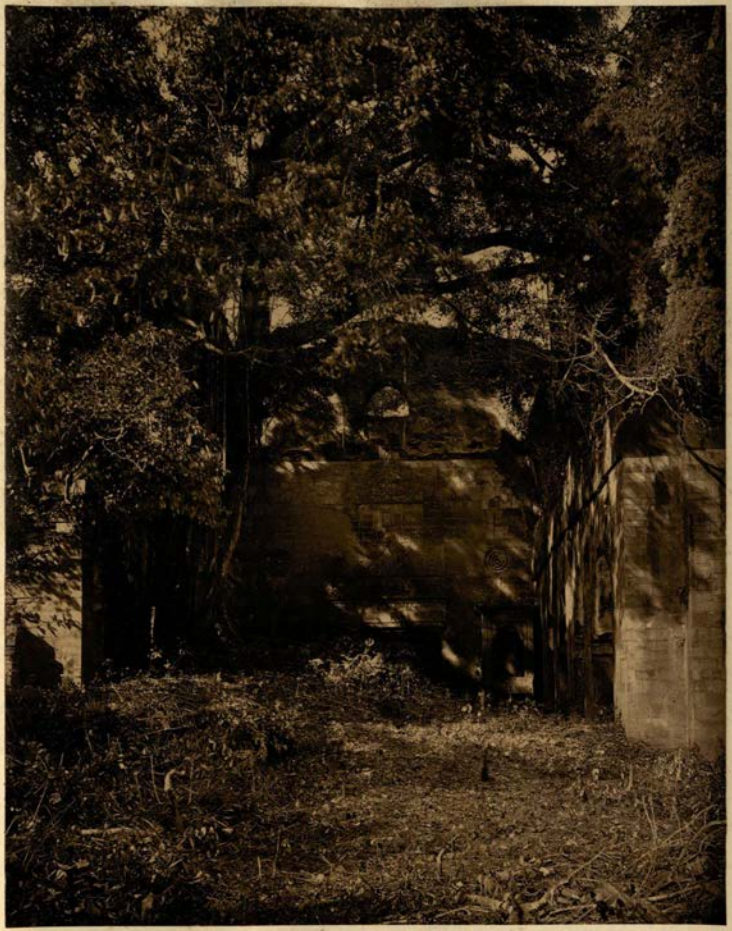
باسم الله الرّحمن الرّحيم

—and over that the Kalma in the Toghra character, together with sentences from the Koran, which ran along the whole front of the Kiblah in letters nine inches in length—

قال الله تعالى يا الذين امنوا اركعوا و اسجدوا و اعبدوا

'"Oh! ye that believe, bow yourselves and fall prostrate and worship."'

قال الله تعالى انما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله واليوم الاخر و اقام الصلواة واتى الزكواة ولم يخش الا الله فعسى اوليك ان يكونوا من المهتدين اجعلتم سقاية الحاج وعمارة المسجد الحرام كمن آمن بالله واليوم الاخر و جاهد في سبيل الله لا يستون عند الله و الله ولا يهدى القوم الظالمين *



TRANSEPT – ADÍNAH MOSQUE.

PULPIT IN TRANSEPT. ADÍNAH MOSQUE.

PULPIT AND PRAYER NICHE IN TRANSEPT. ADÍNAH MOSQUE.

The Bádsháh ka takht.

The only part of the mosque still covered by domes is that portion of the north-west cloister containing the Bádsháh ka takht or King's Throne. This consists of a stone platform eight feet from the ground, supported by three rows of massive hornblende pillars, twenty-one in number. The stones forming the platform are in the shape of long beams, with their ends resting on the pillars, but the accumulated rubbish on the ground below is all that remains of the masonry that must have once filled in and covered these beams. On the platform are built light pillars and arches, which are surmounted by eighteen domes, similar to those over the rest of this cloister. On the western wall are four prayer niches of black polished stone, round which are inscribed passages from the Qorán, delicately carved in Arabic character. A doorway through this wall leads to the upper storey of a square building, in which were deposited the remains of Sikandar Sháh, the founder of the mosque, whose tomb, however, has been destroyed, the roof having fallen in and the whole interior of the structure being filled with *débris*. There are

'"God Almighty hath said, He only shall build temples to God who believeth in God and the last day, and who is constant in prayer, and distributes alms, and feareth nothing but God; these, perhaps, may become of the number of those who are in the right path. Do ye reckon the giving drink to pilgrims, or building a house to God, to be like the actions of those who believe in God and in the judgment day, or of those who fight in the path of God—they shall not be deemed equal in the sight of God, and He will not guide the race of tyrants."

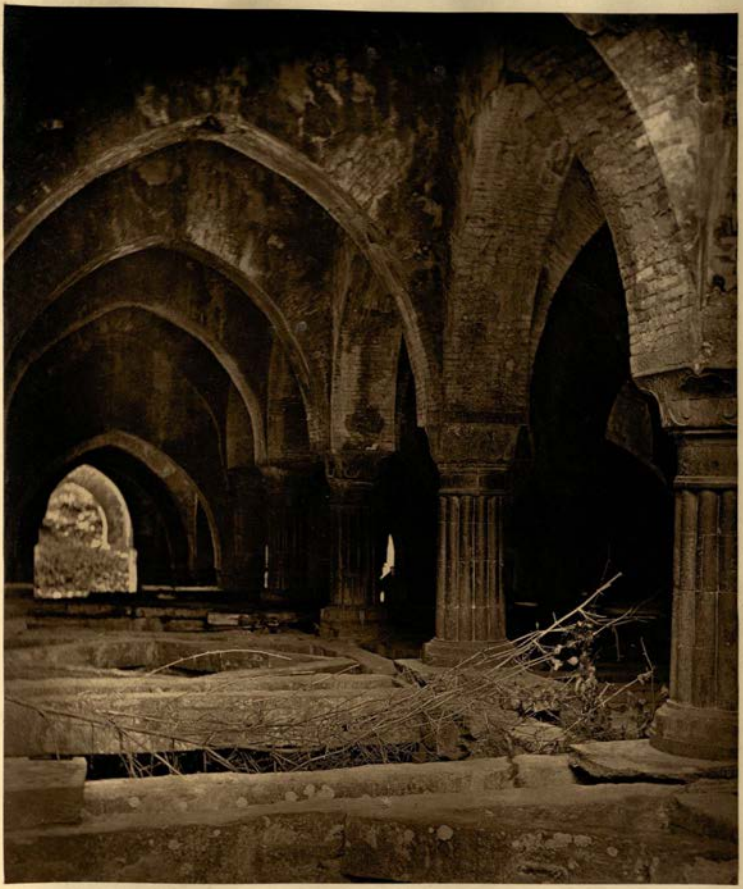
'It would be difficult, at the present day, to exceed the beauty and delicacy of this inscription.

'The whole of the front and side walls are faced with black marble (rendered blue by age), divided into compartments, and ornamented with large roses carved in the marble.

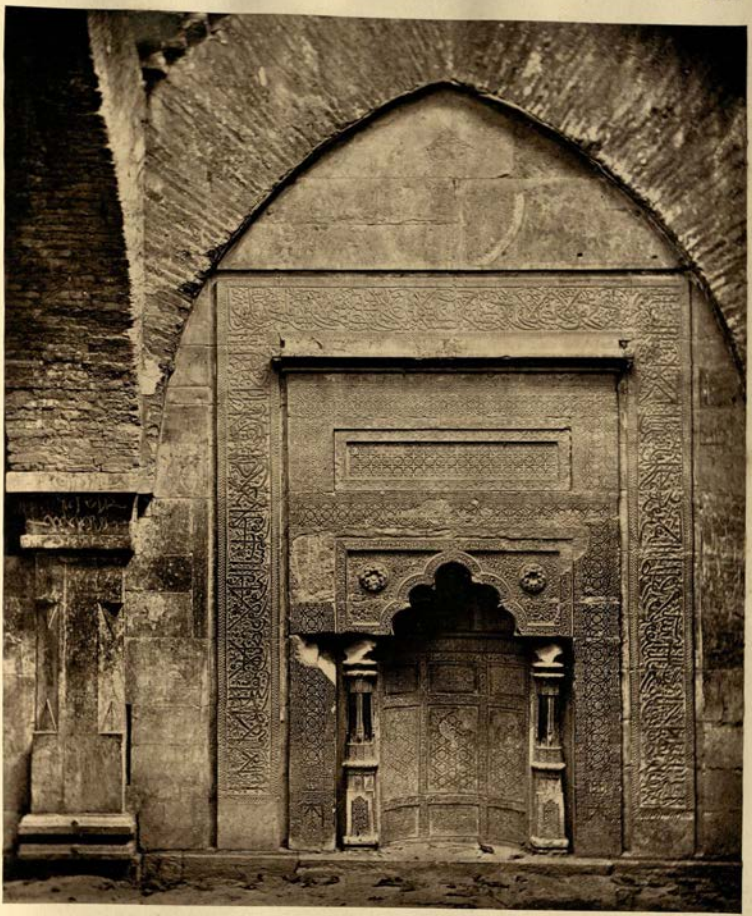
'On the right hand of the Kiblah is the "Mimbar" or pulpit, from which the Imam preached to the people. This, too, is built of black marble, showing curiously carved work, and the steps leading up to the pulpit are of the same materials, as is also the pavilion in which the Imam stood. The marble is adorned with flower work both within and on the outside. Underneath the Mimbar is a small square chamber of black marble, tastefully ornamented with flowered work. Among other decorations, its western compartment contains a most extraordinary piece of sculpture resembling a funereal urn of an antique fashion, the only thing of its kind I ever beheld in any part of Asia. Another urn, nearly resembling this, is to be seen on the front of the Kiblah.'

Major Francklin here refers to a drawing of the mosque which had been made by the late Mr. Creighton, and which he had procured at the Goamalti Factory. He also gives a copy of the Sikandar inscription of A.H. 770 over the gateway, which is reproduced in facsimile in Plate 45.

LOWER PILLARS OF BÁDSHÁH KA TAKHT. ADÍNAH MOSQUE.



UPPER PILLARS OF BÁDSHAH KA TAKHT. ADÍNAH MOSQUE.



PRAYER NICHE ON BÁDSHÁH KA TAKHT. ADÍNAH MOSQUE.

traces of a stone staircase, which gave access to the tomb from outside the building, and probably served as a private entrance to the Bádsháh ka takht.

About a mile east of the Adínah mosque, in the heart of the forest, are the ruins of Satáisghar, said to have been Sikandar Sháh's palace. The buildings occupied the corner of a tank measuring about 120 yards by 80, and from what remains of them it is probable that they were used as baths, for they present a series of arcades open to the water, in a raised embankment, the outer face of which is of masonry. There are evident traces of the palace, if such it was, having been strongly fortified. The tank has its greatest length north and south, and tradition declares it to have been the work of Arjún of the race of Pandú.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INSCRIPTIONS OF GAUR AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

THE inscriptions, of which transcripts have been given above, were taken from buildings, the ruins of which still exist, as shown in the illustrations. But by far the larger number of public buildings in Gaur and Panḍuah were long ago dismantled, the bricks and masonry being carried off for other purposes. Such of the inscriptions belonging to these as, from motives probably of superstitious fear, were left upon the ground, have been stored about the tombs of the Gaur and Panḍuah saints, or been attached to other tombs and even to private buildings. Though no longer *in sitû*, they are still of value where they record a date and the name of the reigning king.

Two collections of these important inscriptions, one made by Major-General A. Cunningham, C.S.I., in 1872, and another by Mr. E. Vesey Westmacott, C.S., in 1874, were lately forwarded to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, with a view to their being deciphered by the Philological Secretary and published with translations in the Society's Journal.* The mural evidence thus obtained from the ruins of Gaur and Panḍuah has accordingly been published by Mr. Blochmann, and this, in conjunction with the testimony of coins described by Mr. E. Thomas, F.R.S., and of other inscriptions collected by Dr. James Wise in Eastern Bengal, has placed the chronology of the Muhammadan history of Bengal on a satisfactory basis.

Both collections consisted of facsimiles obtained by careful rubbings,

* The Bengal Arabic inscriptions abound in grammatical mistakes, consisting mostly 'of wrong articles, mistakes in gender, in oblique cases, and in wrong constructions of the Arabic numerals.' See Mr. Blochmann's note, J.B.A.S. vol. xlii. Pt. 1, p. 257.—A. G.

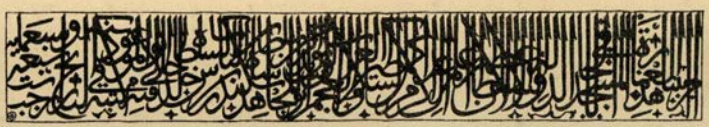
which, after being filled in with black ink, in several cases by professional caligraphers, have been here reproduced from the plates to which Major Waterhouse had successfully transferred them, by the process of photozincography. The series consists of twenty-five inscriptions, ranging in date from A.D. 1369 (A.H. 770) to A.D. 1535 (A.H. 941), and independently of its historical importance is interesting as illustrative of the progress of Arabic caligraphy in early centuries of the Hijra. Many inscriptions, for example Nos. 1, 2, 6, 9, and 19 to 21, are in fact so beautifully carved that their preservation as works of art is desirable. Inscriptions of later date than the sixteenth century, being of less importance, have been excluded from the series.

The plates are arranged chronologically. Four only of the facsimiles, Nos. 1, 4, 8A, and 9, have been already published by the Asiatic Society of Bengal. The following brief notes on each inscription will be found to give all the necessary references to the Society's Journal.

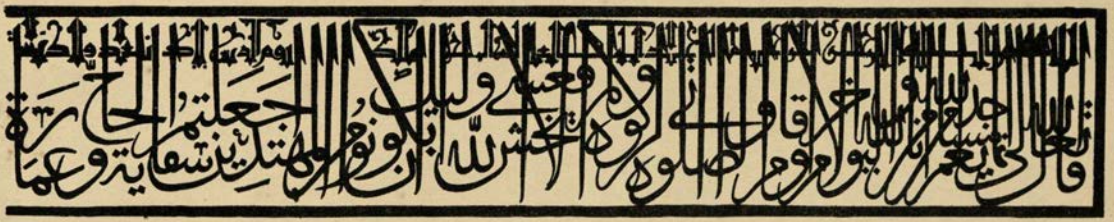
INSCRIPTION 1. This facsimile is from a rubbing taken by General Cunningham of the inscription given above on p. 62. It was published by Mr. Blochmann, J.B.A.S. vol. xlii. Pt. 1, p. 257, plate v. No. 3. It is on the outside of the western wall of the Adínah Mosque at Panduah.

INSCRIPTION 2 is also from one of General Cunningham's rubbings. It consists of verses from the Qorán (Súrah ix. 18, 19), and is cut in the stone over the prayer niche, in the transept of the Adínah mosque, where it is distinctly legible in Mr. Ravenshaw's photograph, plate 41. The original is described by Mr. Blochmann as being 13½ feet long and 1¼ feet broad. The top line is in 'Kufic, and the lower in (what people call now-a-days in India) Tughrá characters.'—J.B.A.S. vol. xlii. Pt. 1, p. 256.

The penmanship shown in both these inscriptions is pronounced by Mr. Blochmann to be 'unrivalled.'



NO. 1. INSCRIPTION ON THE ADÍNAH MOSQUE AT PANDUAH.
(SIKANDAR SHÁH, A.H. 770; A.D. 1369.)



NO. 2. INSCRIPTION FROM THE ADÍNAH MOSQUE (INSIDE) AT PANDUAH.

INSCRIPTION 3. This is from a rubbing taken by Mr. Westmacott from a tomb near the Fort at Máldah. 'The stone is not *in situ*, it must have been taken from a mosque built by one Hilál in A.H. 859.'

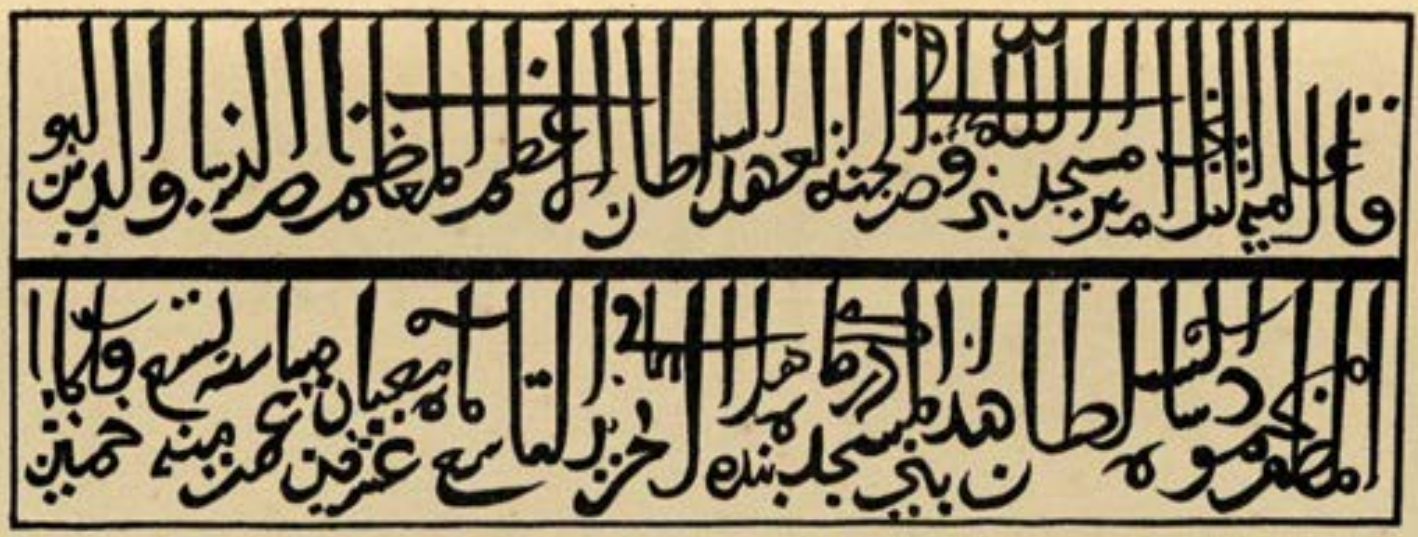
قال عليه السّلام من بني مسجدا بنى الله له قصرا في الجنّة * في العهد السّلطان الاعظم
المعظّم ناصر الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفر محمود شاه السّلطان بني هذا المسجد بندهٔ درگاه
هلال تحريرا فى التّاسع عشر من شعبان عمّت ميا منه سنه تسع و خمسين و ثمانماية *

'He upon whom be peace said, "He who builds a mosque will have a castle built for him by God in paradise." In the reign of the great and exalted king Náçiruddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Mahmúd Sháh, the king, this mosque was built by the slave of the throne (of God), Hilál. Written on the 19th Sha'bán—may the blessing of this month be general!—of the year 859 (4th August, 1455).'

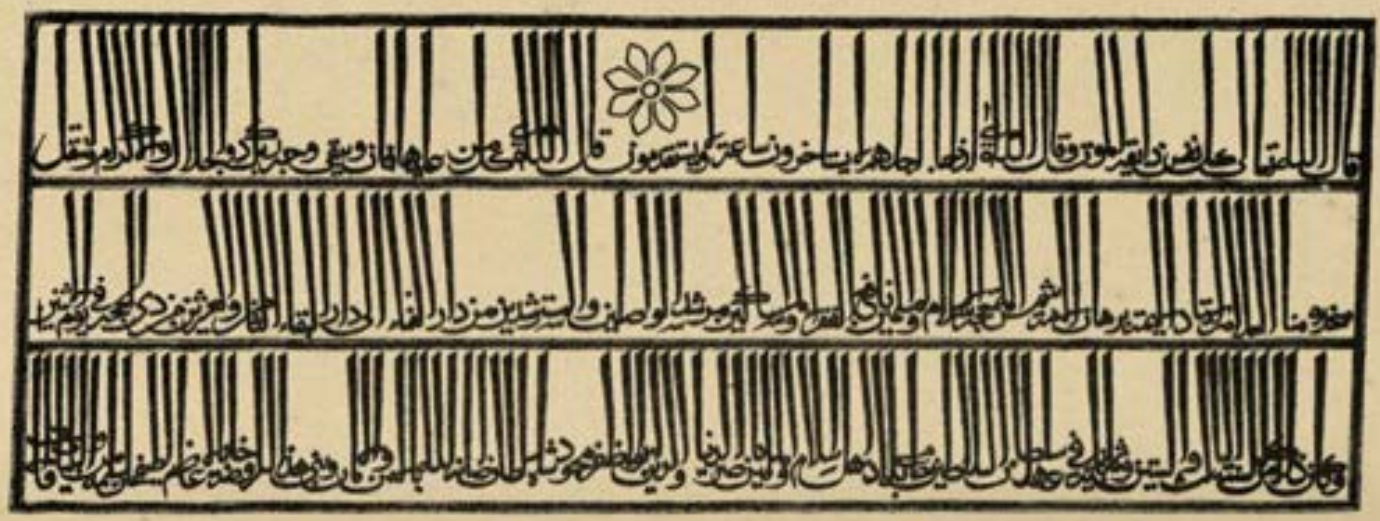
This is the earliest inscription which has yet been found of Mahmúd Sháh I.—J.B.A.S. 1874, Pt. 1, p. 294.*

INSCRIPTION 4 is from a rubbing taken by General Cunningham, of the inscription over the gateway close to Núr Quṭb 'Álam's tomb, which is given above at p. 52. The name of Chhotá Dargáh seems to be locally given to this tomb.—J.B.A.S. 1873, Pt. 1, p. 271.

* Coins of this king, however, are known of earlier dates, beginning with A.H. 846. Several have lately been discovered in Bagurá District. J.B.A.S. 1875, Pt. 1, p. 288.—A. G.



NO. 3. INSCRIPTION FROM HILÁL'S MOSQUE NEAR THE FORT OF MÁLDAH.
(MAHMÚD SHÁH I, A.H. 859; A.D. 1455)



NO. 4. INSCRIPTION FROM THE CHHOTA DARGAH AT PANDUAH.
(MAHMÚD SHÁH I, A.H. 863; A.D. 1459.)

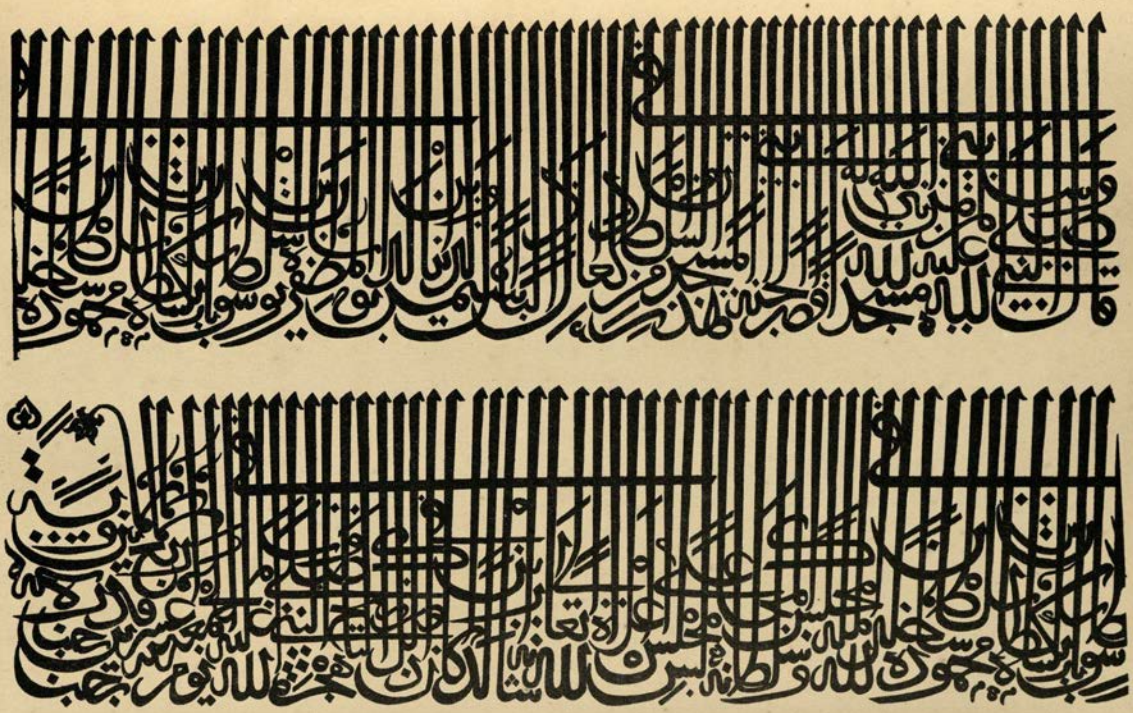
INSCRIPTION 5. This, too, is from a rubbing taken by General Cunningham of the inscription given above at p. 50, as being on the tomb of Núr Quṭb 'Álam, at Panduah.—J.B.A.S. 1873, Pt. 1, p. 276.

INSCRIPTION 6 is also from a rubbing taken by General Cunningham of the inscription on the entrance to the Court of Qadam Rasúl Mosque at Gaur. It is given above at p. 22.—J.B.A.S. 1873, Pt. 1, p. 277.

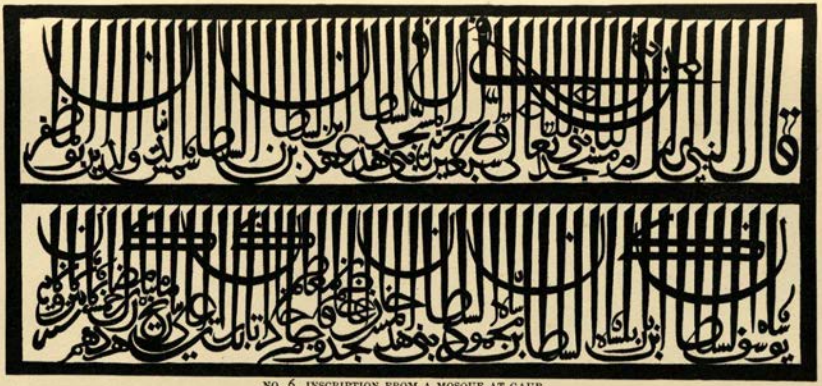
INSCRIPTION 7. This beautiful inscription is from one of Mr. Westmacott's rubbings. It is upon one of the many slabs which owe their preservation to the successive incumbents of the Goámáltí indigo factory. Mr. Westmacott thinks that the slab belonged to a ruined mosque some 200 yards S.E. of this factory. 'A row of four granite pillars, ten feet apart, and a corresponding pilaster; the northern wall built of brick with a course of granite, some of which is cut into a moulding, and a pinnacle at the south-western angle, still remain to show that it was a fine building, with probably ten domes in two rows, the length of the building from N. to S. being divided by the row of pillars.' The following copy of the inscription was published in J.B.A.S. 1874, Pt. 1, p. 299:

قال النّبيّ صلّى الله عليه و سلّم من بني مسجدا فى الدّنيا بني الله تعالى له سبعين قصرا في الجنّة * بني هذا المسجد .... الخ اعظم و خاقان معظّم پهلوي عصر مخلص خان ..... في عهد سلطان الاعظم المعظّم العادل سيف الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفّر فيروز شاه سلطان الاعظم المعظّم العادل سيف الدّنيا الدّين ابو المظفّر فيروز شاه سلطان خلّد الله ملكه و سلطانه و اعلي امره و شانه في الخامس عشر من شهر صفر سنة اربع و تسعين و ثمانمانة *

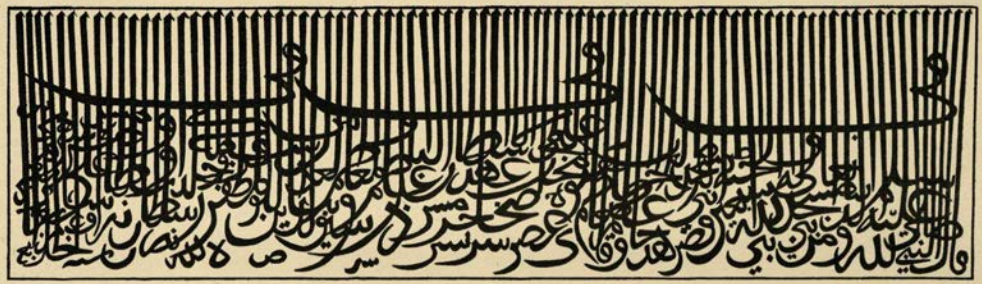
'The Prophet (blessings on him) says, "He who builds," etc., etc. This . . . mosque was built by the great Ulugh, the exalted lord, ... Mukhliç Khán, ... in the reign of the great, exalted, liberal, and just king Saif-uddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Fírúz Sháh, the king,—may God perpetuate his kingdom and his rule and elevate his condition and dignity!—on the 15th Safar, 894 (18th January, 1489).'



NO. 5. INSCRIPTION FROM A MOSQUE AT PANDUAH.
(YÚSUF SHÁH, A.H. 884; A.D. 1479.)



NO. 6. INSCRIPTION FROM A MOSQUE AT GAUR.
(YÚSUF SHÁH, A.H. 885; A.D. 1480.)



NO. 7. INSCRIPTION FROM A MOSQUE AT GAUR.
(FÍRÚZ SHÁH II, A.H. 894; A.D. 1489.)

INSCRIPTION 8 is from another rubbing taken by Mr. Westmacott, from the Katrah of Old Máldah, the gate of which forms the subject of Plate 24. A transcript of the inscription, which is imperfect, the Hijra century of the date only being preserved, was published in J.B.A.S. 1874, Pt. 1, pp. 299, 300:

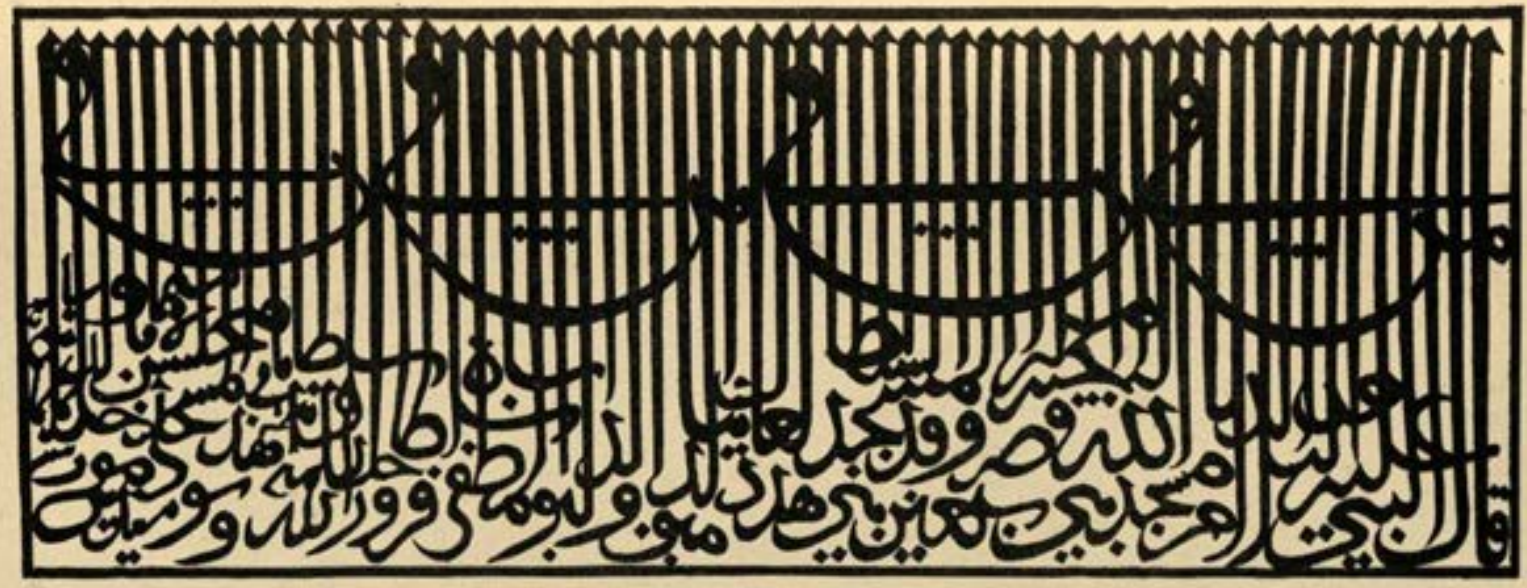
قال النّبيّ صلّى عليه و سلّم من بني مسجدا بني اللّه له سبعين قصرا فى الجنّة * وقد بني هذا المسجد السّلطان العادل سيف الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفر فيروز شاه سلطان خلّد اللّه ملكه و سلطانه و بانى هذا المسجد مجلس ..... و هو سعيد .... مؤرخا سنه ..... ثمانماية *

'The Prophet, upon whom be peace, has said, "He who builds," etc. This mosque was built (in the time of?) of the just king Saifuddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Fírúz Sháh, the king—may God perpetuate his kingdom and his rule! And the builder of this mosque is Majlis . . . . . namely Sa'íd . . . . dated anno 8 . . '

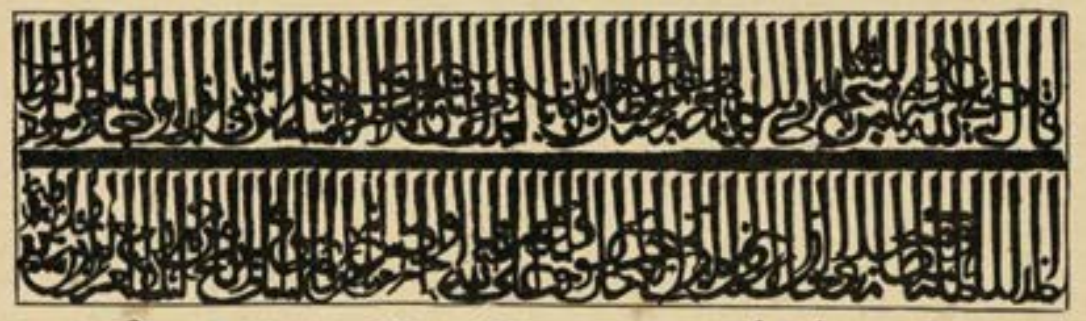
INSCRIPTION 8A is from a rubbing taken by General Cunningham of an inscription which he found at Gaur. The exact locality within the ruins in which it was found is not stated in J.B.A.S. 1873, Pt. 1, p. 289, in which Mr. Blochmann published the facsimile, as well as the following transcript of the inscription:

قال النّبيّ صلّى اللّه عليه و سلّم من بني مسجدا لله بني اللّه له قصرا فى الجنّة * بني المسجد فى عهد سلطان الزّمان بالعدل و الاحسان غوث الاسلام والمسلمين ناصر الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المجاهد محمود شاه السّلطان خلّد اللّه ملكه و سلطانه بنى المسجد الخان الاعظم المعظّم الغ مجلس خان *** فى التاريخ الثلث و العشرين من شهر ربيع الاول سنه ست و تسعين و ثمانماية؟] *

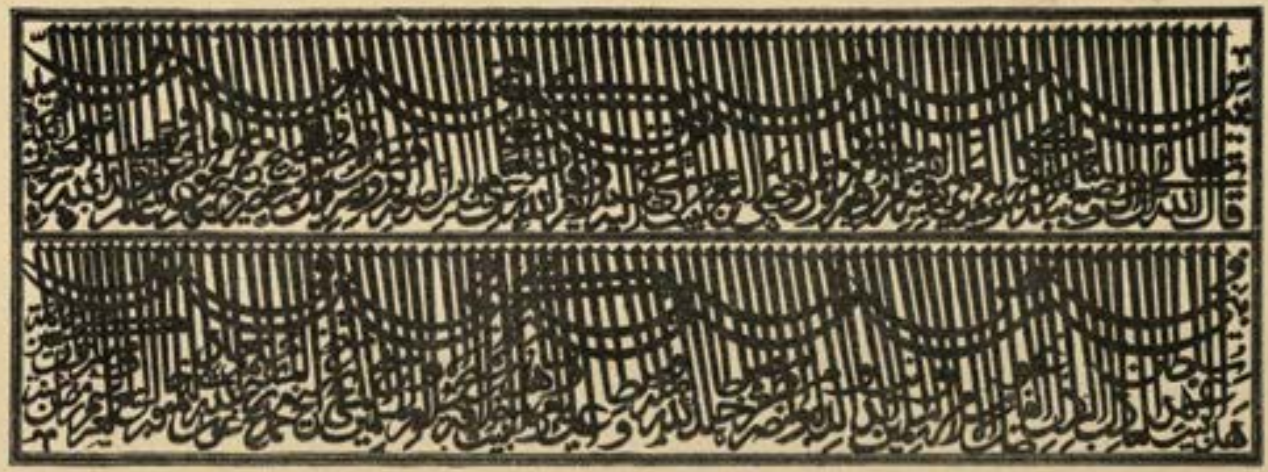
'The Prophet (may God bless him!) says, "He who builds," etc., (as before). This mosque was built in the reign of the king of the time, (who is endowed) with justice and liberality, the help of Islám and the Muslims, Náçiruddunyá waddín Abul Mujáhid Mahmúd Sháh, the king—may



NO. 8. INSCRIPTION FROM A MOSQUE NEAR MÁLDAH. (FÍRÚZ SHÁH II; DATE ILLEGIBLE.)



NO. 8a. INSCRIPTION FROM A MOSQUE AT GAUR (MAHMÚD SHÁH II: A.H. 896 (?)



NO. 9. INSCRIPTION FROM THE CHHOTÁ DARGÁH AT PANDUAH (MUZAFFAR SHÁH, A.H. 898: A.D. 1493.)

God perpetuate his kingdom and rule!—by the great and exalted Khán Ulugh Majlis Khán . . . . (illegible). Dated 23rd Rabí' . . . .'

Here, again, the inscription is imperfect, containing only the date of the month—that of the year, A.H. 896, having been filled in conjecturally.

INSCRIPTION 9, also from one of General Cunningham's rubbings, is from Núr Quṭb 'Álam's Dargah. It was published in facsimile by Mr. Blochmann in J.B.A.S. 1873, Pt. 1, p. 290, plate vi. No. 2, with the following transcript:

قال الله تعالى انّ اوّل بيت وضع الناس الذى ببكة مباركا وهدى للعالمين فيه ايات بيّنات مقام ابراهيم و من دخله كان آمنا و لله على الناس حجّ البيت من استطاع اليه سبيلا و من كفر فانّ الله غنىّ عن العالمين * بني في البيت الصّوفة الرّوضة قطب الاقطاب قتيل محبّت وهّاب شيخ المشايخ حضرت نور الحق والشّرع سيّد قطب عالم قدّس الله سرّه العزيز و نوّر الله قبره * بني هذا البيت في عهد السّلطان العادل الباذل الفاضل غوث الاسلام و المسلمين شمس الدّنيا و الدّين ابو النّصر مظفر شاه سلطان خلّد الله ملكه و سلطانه و اعلى امره و شانه بني هذا البيت في خلافة شيخ الاسلام و المسلمين شيخ المشايخ ابن شيخ المشايخ شيخ محمّد غوث سلّمه الله تعالى دائما مؤرخا فى السّابع و العشر من شهر رمضان مبارك فى سنة ثمان تسعين ثمانماية *

'God Almighty says, "Verily, the first house that was founded for men is the one in Bakkah (Makkah), blessed, and a guidance to all beings. In it are clear signs: the place of Abraham, and who entered into it, was safe, and God enjoined men to visit it, if they are able to go there; but whosoever disbelieves, verily God is independent of all beings." (Qor. iii. 90 to 92). In this Súfí building the tomb of the pole *(quṭb)* of poles was built, who was slain by the love of the All-Giver, the Shaikh of Shaikhs, Hazrat Núr ul Haq washshara', Sayyid Quṭb 'Álam—may God sanctify his beloved secret, and may God illuminate his grave! This house was built in the reign of the just, liberal, learned king, the help of Islám and the Muslims, Shamsuddunyá waddín Abul-Naçr Muzaffar Sháh, the king, may God perpetuate his kingdom and rule, and may He elevate his condition and dignity! This house was built during the khiláfat of the Shaikh ul-Islám, the Shaikh of Shaikhs, son of the Shaikh of Shaikhs, Shaikh Muhammad Ghaus—may God Almighty ever protect him! Dated, 17th Ramazán, 898 (2nd July, 1493).'

Inscriptions 10 and 11 are both from Mr. Westmacott's rubbings obtained at Máldah, and are dated within a year of each other, in the reign of Husain Sháh. Both record the foundation of mosques, but the first was found on private premises, at a tomb called Durgáh i Aulád Sultán Ádam Balkhí. The second inscription was found on the ruined Fautí or Burial Mosque, just outside the Máldah Katrah. No. 10 may, says Mr. Blochmann, have been carved by the same hand as the Muzaffar Sháh inscription in No. 9 above. Transcripts of both inscriptions, as follows, are published in J.B.A.S. 1874, Pt. 1, pp. 301, 302.

INSCRIPTION 10:

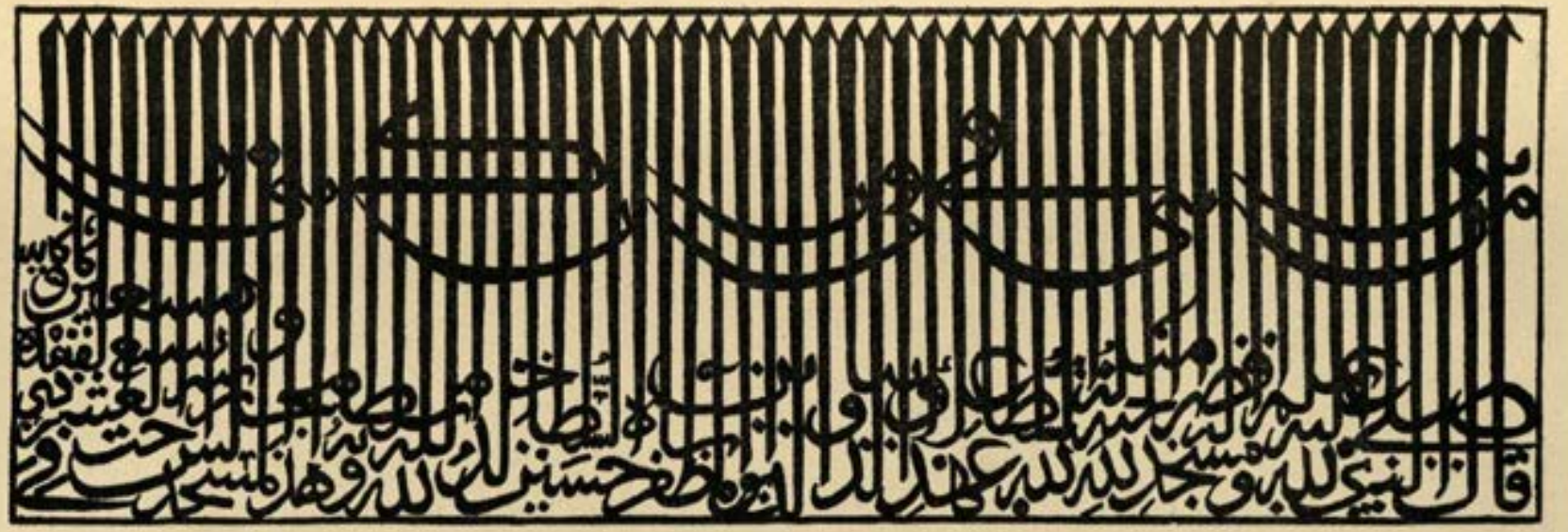
قال النّبي صلّى الله عليه و سلّم من بنى مسجدا لله بني الله له قصرا مثله في الجنّة *
بني في عهد السّلطان علاؤ الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفّر حسين شاه السّلطان خلّد الله ملكه
و سلطانه بني هذا المسجد مجلس راحت في العشر ذي القعده من سنه تسع و تسعين
و ثمانماية *

'The Prophet (God's blessings on him!) says, "He who builds a mosque for God, will have a castle like it built for him by God in Paradise." It was built in the reign of Sultán 'Alá uddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Husain Sháh, the king—may God perpetuate his rule and kingdom! This mosque was built by Majlis Ráhat (ullah), on the 10th Zí'l Qa'dah, 899 (13th August, 1494).'

INSCRIPTION 11:

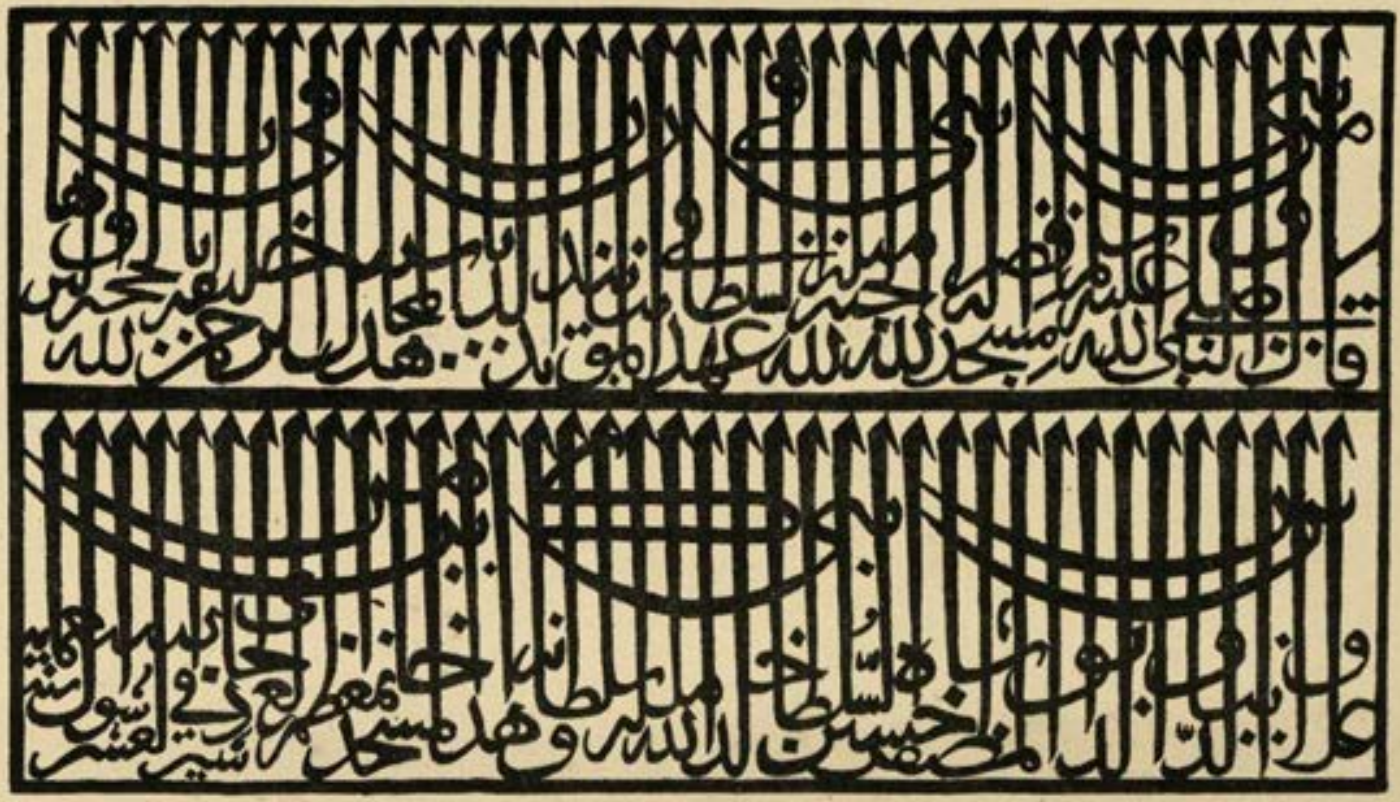
قال النّبي صلّى الله عليه و سلّم من بنى مسجدا لله بني الله له قصرا مثله فى الجنّة *
بنى في عهد السّلطان المؤيّد بتائيد الدّيّان المجاهد في سبيل الرّحمن خليفة الله بالحجّة
و البرهان علاؤ الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفّر حسين شاه السّلطان خلّد الله ملكه و سلطانه بني
هذا المسجد خانمعظّم بن الغ شير فى الحادي العشر شوّال من سنه تسعماية *

'The Prophet (God's blessings on him!) says, "He who builds a mosque for God, will have a castle built for him by God in Paradise." It was built in the time of the king who is helped by the assistance of the Judge, and exerts himself on the road of the Merciful, the Khalífah of God by proof and



No. 10. INSCRIPTION FROM A MOSQUE NEAR MÁLDAH.

(Husain Sháh, A. H. 899; A. D. 1494.)



No. 11. INSCRIPTION FROM THE FAUTÍ MASJID AT MÁLDAH

(Husian Sháh, A. H. 900; A. D. 1495.)

evidence, 'Aláuddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Husain Sháh, the king, —may God perpetuate his kingdom and rule! This mosque was built by Khán Mu'azzam, son of Ulugh Sher, on the 11th Shawwál, 900 (5th July, 1495).'

INSCRIPTION 12 is from a rubbing taken by Mr. Westmacott from a little mosque near the police Thánnah at English Bázár, to which mosque it clearly never belonged, since it records the foundation of a Madrasah or College, probably, as above observed in a note at p. 34, of the institution still traceable at Gaur. The following transcript of the inscription was published by Mr. Blochmann in J.B.A.S. 1874, Pt. 1, p. 303. It is one of the few Bengal inscriptions, he points out, which are free from grammatical mistakes:

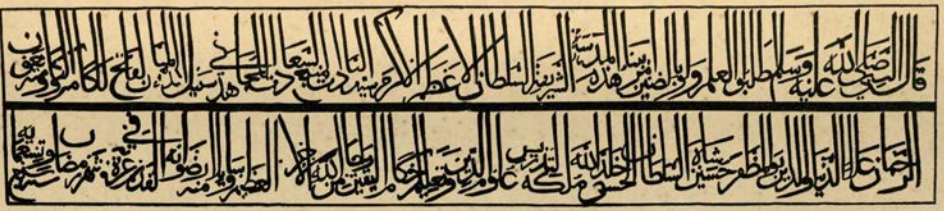
قال النّبيّ صلّى الله عليه و سلّم اطلبوا العلم ولو بالصّين * امر ببناء هذه المدرسة الشريفة السّلطان الاعظم الاكرم سيّد السّادات منبع السّعادات المجاهد في سبيل الله المنّان الفاتح الكامرو و الكامته بعون الرّحمٰن علاء الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفر حسين شاه السّلطان الحسينيّ خلد الله ملكه لتدريس علوم الدّين و تعليم احكام اليقين راجيا من الله الاجر العظيم و سائلا منه رضوانه القديم فى غرّة شهر رمضان سنة سبع و تسعماية *

'The Prophet (God's blessings on him!) has said, "Search after knowledge, and if it were in China." This excellent Madrasah was ordered to be built by the great and generous king, the Sayyid of the Sayyids, the source of auspiciousness, who exerts himself on the road of God the All-giver, the conqueror of Kámrú and Kámtah with the help of the Merciful, 'Alá uddunyá waddín Abul Muzáffar Husain Sháh, the king, the Husainí—may God perpetuate his kingdom!—for the teaching of the sciences of religion and instruction in those orders which alone are true, because he hopes to obtain from God the great reward and asks *Him* for His everlasting mercy, on the 1st Ramazán, 907 (10th March, 1502).'

INSCRIPTION 13 is from another of Mr. Westmacott's rubbings; it was found in the mosque of Muçtafa Khán at Gilabárí, about five miles below English Bázár on the west bank of the Mahánandá river. This mosque is built of materials taken from Gaur, and the inscribed slab must have belonged to some gate in this city.

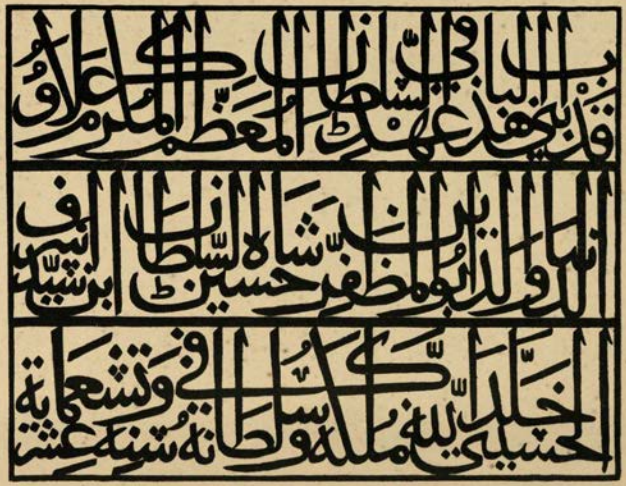
The following transcript was published by Mr. Blochmann in J.B.A.S. 1874, Pt. 1, p. 304:

قد بنى هذا الباب في عهد السّلطان المعظم المكرّم علاؤ الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفر حسين شاه السّلطان ابن سيّد اشرف الحسيني خلّد الله ملكه و سلطانه فى سنة عشر و تسعماية *



NO. 12. INSCRIPTION FROM HUSAIN SHÁH'S MADRASAH AT GAUR.

(HUSAIN SHÁH, A.H. 907/A.D. 1500.)



NO. 13. INSCRIPTION FROM A GATE AT GAUR.

(HUSAIN SHÁH, A.H. 909; A.D. 1504-5.)

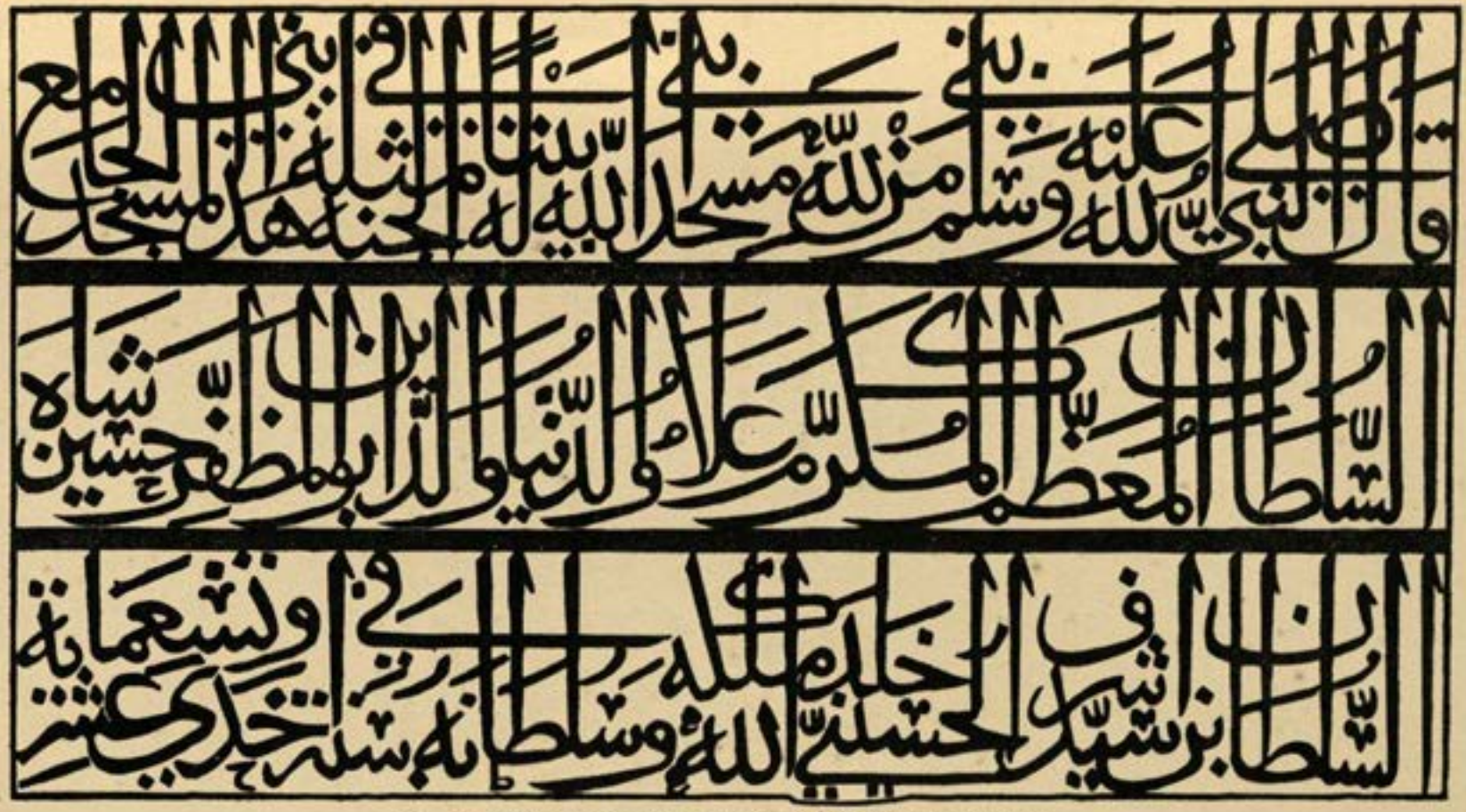
'This door was built in the time of the exalted and honoured king, 'Aláuddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Husain Sháh, the king, son of Sayyid Ashraf Al-Husainí—may God perpetuate his kingdom and his rule!—in the year 910 (A.D. 1504–5).'

INSCRIPTION 14 is from a rubbing taken by General Cunningham of an inscription from Máldah. The following is a transcript, but in publishing this in J.B.A.S. 1873, Pt. 1, p. 294, Mr. Blochmann has given no particulars of the site in which it was found :

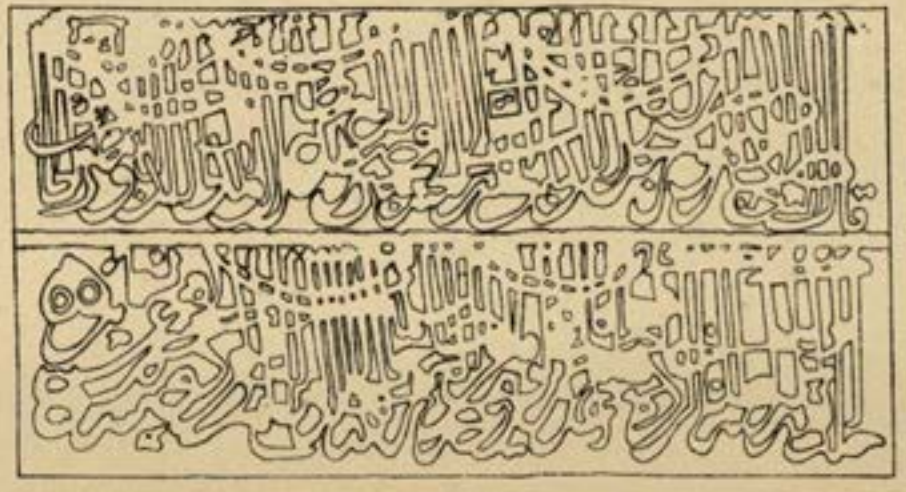
قال النّبيّ صلّى اللّه عليه و سلّم من بنى مسجدا لله بني اللّه له بيتا مثله فى الجنّة * بني هذا المسجد الجامع السّلطان المعظّم المكرّم علاء الدّنيا والدّين ابو المظفر حسين شاه السّلطان بن سيّد اشرف الحسينىّ خلّد اللّه ملكه و سلطانه في سنة احدي عشر و تسعماية *

'The Prophet says, etc., etc. This Jámi' mosque was built by the great and liberal king 'Aláuddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Husain Sháh, the king, son of Sayyid Ashraf ul-Husainí—may God perpetuate his kingdom and rule! In the year 911 (A.D. 1505).'

INSCRIPTION 15. This inscription, from a mosque in Panduah, has not been deciphered. General Cunningham's rubbing, however, gives the date clearly, viz. A.H. 911 (A.D. 1505).



NO. 14. INSCRIPTION FROM HUSAIN SHÁH'S MOSQUE AT GAUR.
(HUSAIN SHÁH, A.H. 911; A.D. 1506.)



NO. 15. INSCRIPTION FROM A MOSQUE AT PANDUAH.
(HUSAIN SHÁH, A.H. 911; A.D. 1505.)

INSCRIPTION 16 is from one of General Cunningham's rubbings. A transcript of it was published by Mr. Blochmann in J.B.A.S. 1873, Pt. 1, p. 294, and has been reproduced above at p. 8. Shaikh Akhi, who came from Delhi, was one of the saints of Gaur, where he died in A.H. 758 (A.D. 1357). He was called 'the mirror of Hindustan,' says Mr. Blochmann, quoting from the Haft Iqlím, and 'kings became his pupils.'—J.B.A.S. as above, p. 260.

NO. 16. INSCRIPTION FROM SHAIKH AKHÍ SIRÁJ'S TOMB AT GAUR.
(HUSAIN SHÁH, A.H. 916; A.D. 1510.)

INSCRIPTION 17 is also from a rubbing taken by General Cunningham, and bears the same date as No. 16. The following transcript was published in Mr. Blochmann's valuable paper of 1873, already so often cited, J.B.A.S. 1873, Pt. 1, p. 294, but no particulars are given of the place in which the inscription was found. It evidently belonged to one of the numerous tombs of Gaur.

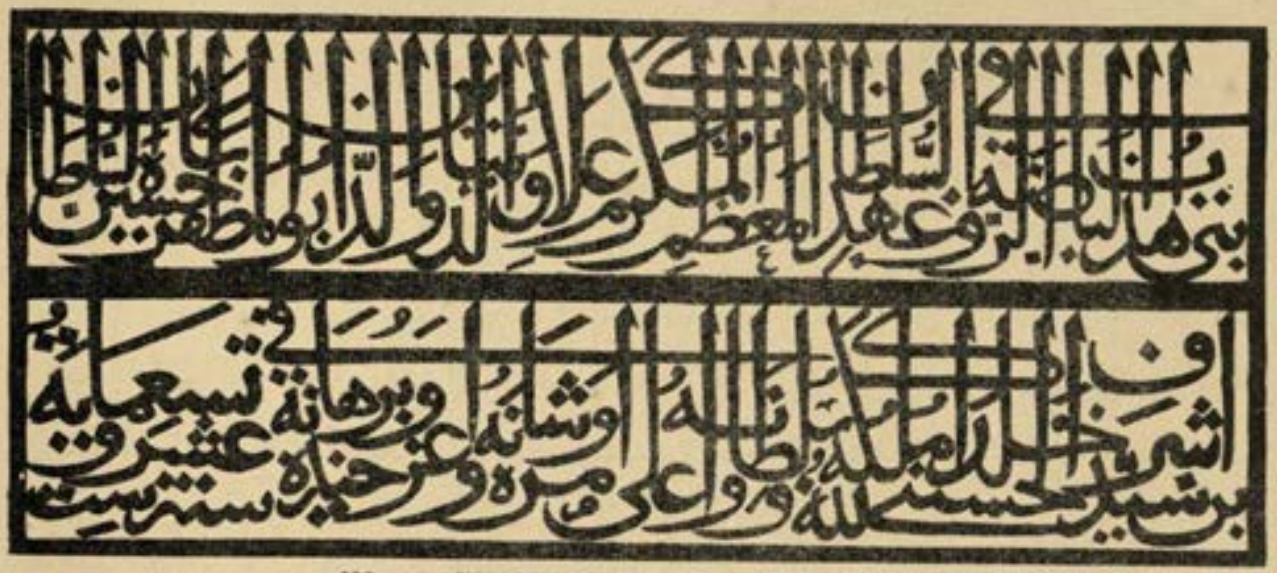
بني هذا الباب الرّوضة في عهد السّلطان المعظّم المكرّم علاؤ الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفّر حسين شاه السّلطان بن سيّد اشرف الحسينيّ خلّد الله ملكه و سلطانه و اعلي امره و شانه و اعزّ خيارة و برهانه فى سنة ستّ عشر و تسعماية *

'The door of this tomb was built during the reign of the exalted and liberal king, 'Aláuddunya waddín Abul Muzaffar Husain Sháh, son of Sayyid Ashraf ul-Husainí,—may God perpetuate his kingdom and rule, and elevate his condition and dignity, and may He render his benefits and evidence honourable! In the year 916 (A.D. 1510).'

INSCRIPTION 18 is from a rubbing taken by Mr. Westmacott, from one of two inscriptions found in a mud hut at Molnatalí, a mile south of Old Máldah. It had been used apparently to mark the grave of a Pír or saint. Mr. Blochmann has published the following transcript of it in J.B.A.S. 1874, Pt. 1, p. 305:

قال النّبيّ صلّي الله عليه و سلّم من بنى مسجدا لله بنى الله له بيتا مثله فى الجنّة * بني هذا المسجد السّلطان المعظّم المكرّم علاؤ الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفّر حسين شاه السلطان بن سيّد اشرف الحسيني خلّد الله ملكه و سلطانه سنه ثمان عشر و تسعماية *

'The Prophet, etc., etc. This mosque was built by the exalted and honoured king 'Alá uddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Husain Sháh, the king, son of Sayyid Ashraf, Al-Husainí—may God perpetuate his kingdom and his rule!—in the year 918 (A.D. 1512).'



NO. 17. INSCRIPTION FROM A GATE AT GAUR.
(HUSAIN SHÁH, A.H. 916; A.D. 1510.)

NO. 18. INSCRIPTION FROM HUSAIN SHÁH'S MOSQUE AT GAUR.
(HUSAIN SHÁH, A.H. 918; A.D. 1512.)

INSCRIPTION 19 is from a rubbing in General Cunningham's collection, and came from Gaur. Whether it was found *in situ* is not stated in Mr. Blochmann's paper of 1873, when the following transcript of it was published in J.B.A.S. Pt. 1, p. 295:

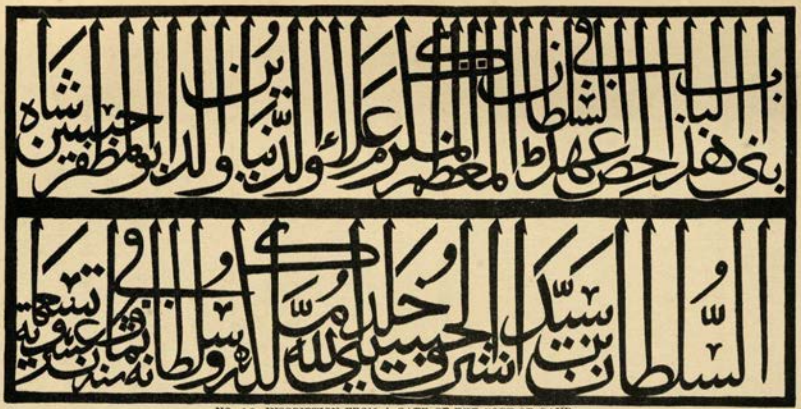
بني هذا الباب الحصن فى عهد السلطان المعظّم المكرّم علاؤ الدّنيا والدّين ابو المظفّر حسين شاه السّلطان بن سيّد اشرف الحسينيّ خلّد اللّه ملكه و سلطانه في سنة ثمان عشر و تسعماية *

'This gate of the fort was built during the reign of the exalted and liberal king 'Aláuddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Husain Sháh, the king, son of Sayyid Ashraf ul-Husainí—may God perpetuate his kingdom and his rule! In the year 918 (A.D. 1512).'

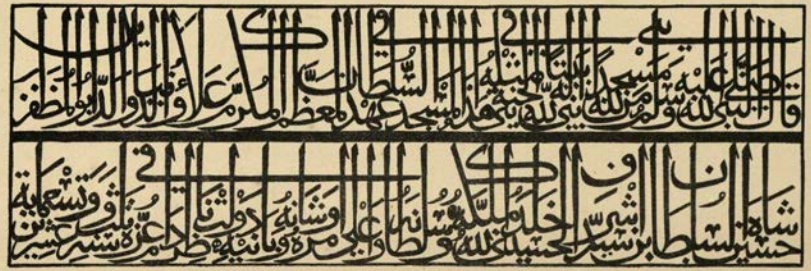
INSCRIPTION 20 is from one of Mr. Westmacott's rubbings. He found it at Bholahát, which is on the west bank of the Mahánandá near Gilabárí, referred to above at p. 80. Mr. Blochmann, in publishing a transcript of it in J.B.A.S. 1874, Pt. 1, p. 306, remarks that the founder of the mosque must have been an eunuch.

قال النّبيّ صلّي اللّه عليه و سلّم من بني مسجدا للّه بنى اللّه له بيتا مثله في الجنّة * بني هذا المسجد فى عهد السّلطان المعظّم المكرّم علاو الدّنيا والدّين ابو الظفّر حسين شاه السّلطان بن سيّد اشرف الحسيني خلّد اللّه ملكه و سلطانه و اعلى امره و شانه و بانيه دولت ناظر دام عزه في سنة ثلث و عشرين و تسعماية *

'The Prophet, etc., etc. (as before). This mosque was built in the reign of the exalted and honoured king 'Aláuddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Husain Sháh, the king, son of Sayyid Ashraf, Al-Husainí—may God perpetuate his kingdom and his rule and elevate his condition and dignity! Its builder is Daulat Názir,—may his honour continue!—in the year 923 (A.D. 1517).'



NO. 19. INSCRIPTION FROM A GATE OF THE FORT OF GAUR.
(HUSAIN SHÁH, A.H. 908; A.D. 1502.)



NO. 20. INSCRIPTION FROM DAULAT NÁZIR'S MOSQUE NEAR MÁLDAH
(HUSAIN SHÁH, A.H. 914; A.D. 1507.)

INSCRIPTION 21 is the other of the two inscriptions mentioned above as having been found by Mr. Westmacott at Molnatalí, over the grave of a Pír called Sultán Shihábuddín. It records the foundation of the door of a mosque by one Fath Khán: J.B.A.S. 1874, Pt. 1, p. 307.

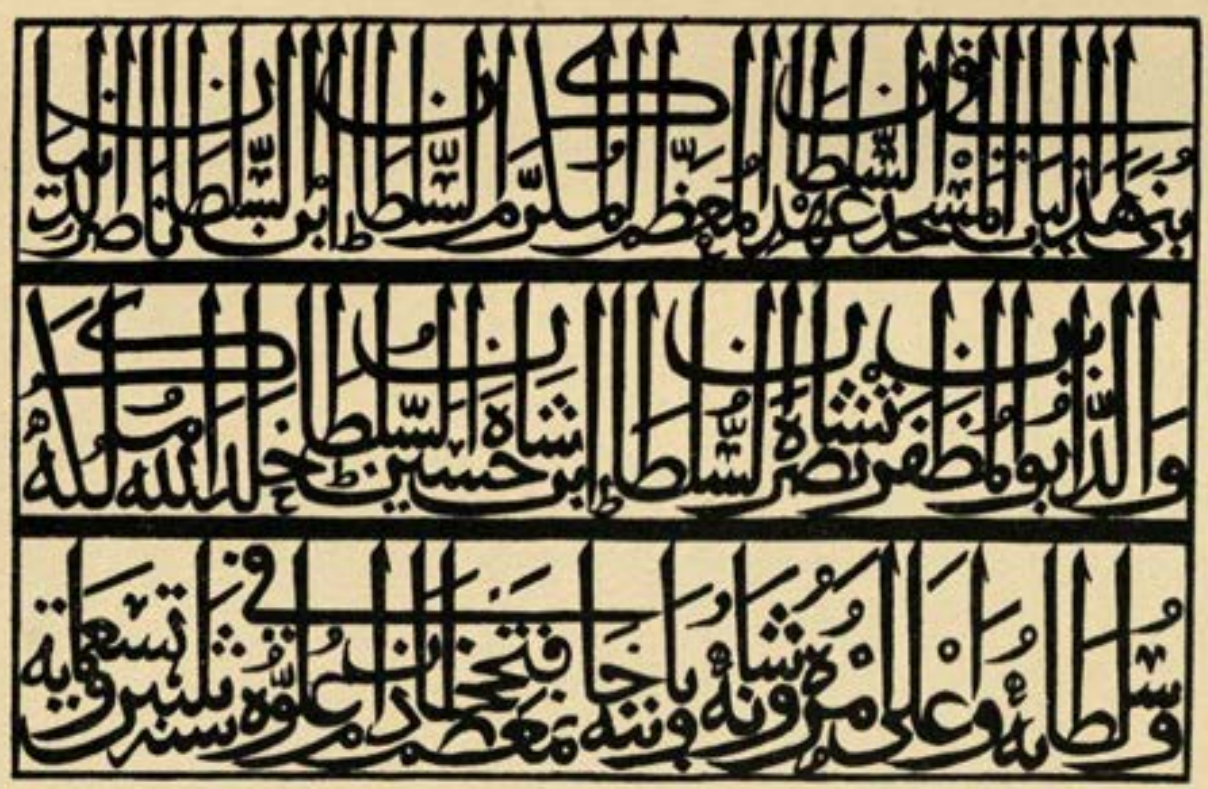
بني هذا الباب المسجد في عهد السّلطان المعظّم المكرّم السّلطان بن السلطان ناصر الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفّر نصرتشاه السّلطان بن حسين شاه السّلطان خلّد الله ملكه وسلطانه و اعلي امره و شانه و بانيه خانمعظّم فتحخان دام علوّه في سنه ثلثين و تسعماية *

'The door of this mosque was built in the reign of the exalted and honoured king, son of a king, Náçir uddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Nuçrat Sháh, the king, son of Husain Sháh, the king,—may God perpetuate his kingdom and his rule, and may He elevate his condition and dignity! Its builder is Khán Mu'azzam Fath Khán—may his exalted position last!—in the year 930 (A.D. 1524).'

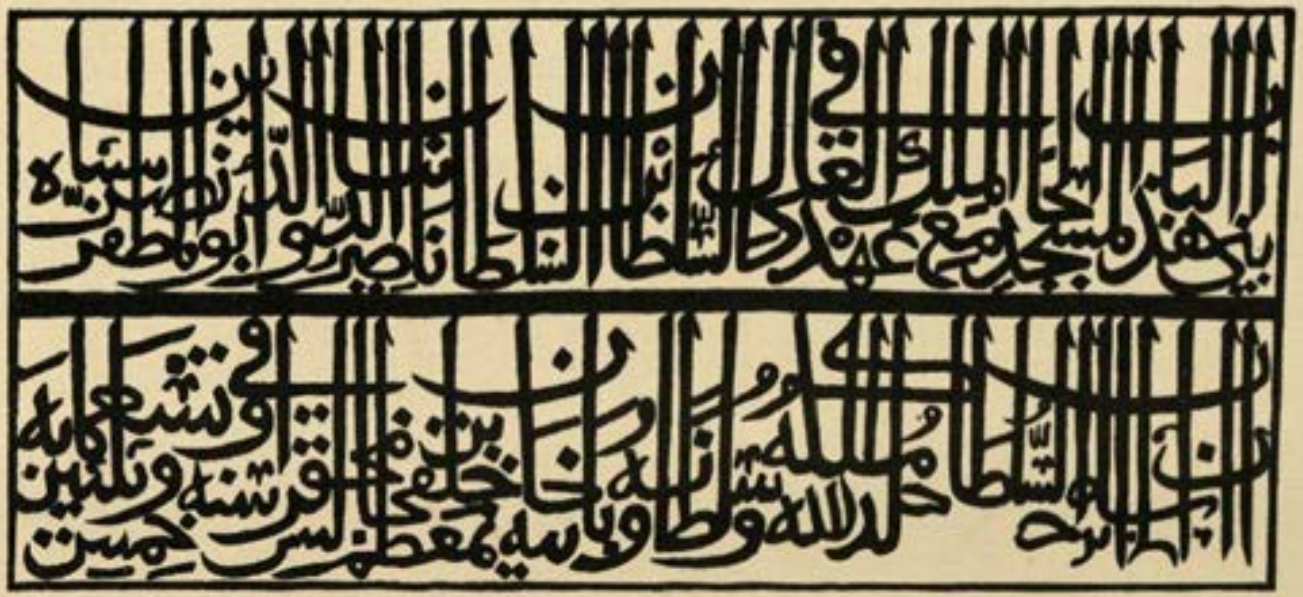
INSCRIPTION 22 is from a rubbing taken by Mr. Westmacott, from the tomb of a saint called Nankápatí Sáhib, about a mile south of Máldah. It records the building of a mosque entrance by one Khalf Khán, apparently a Turk. The following transcript was published by Mr. Blochmann in J.B.A.S. 1874, Pt. 1, p. 307.

بني هذا الباب المسجد الجامع في عهد الملك العادل السّلطان بن السّلطان ناصر الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفّر نصرتشاه السّلطان بن حسين شاه السّلطان خلّد الله ملكه و سلطانه و بانيه خانمعظّم خلفخان بن مجلس قرا في سنة خمس و ثلثين و تسعماية *

'The door of this Jámi' mosque was built in the time of the just king, the Sultán, son of a Sultán, Náçir uddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Nuçrat Sháh, the king, son of Husain Sháh, the king—may God perpetuate his kingdom and his rule! Its builder is Khán Mu'azzam Khalf Khán, son of Majlis Qará. In the year 935 (A.D. 1528–29).'

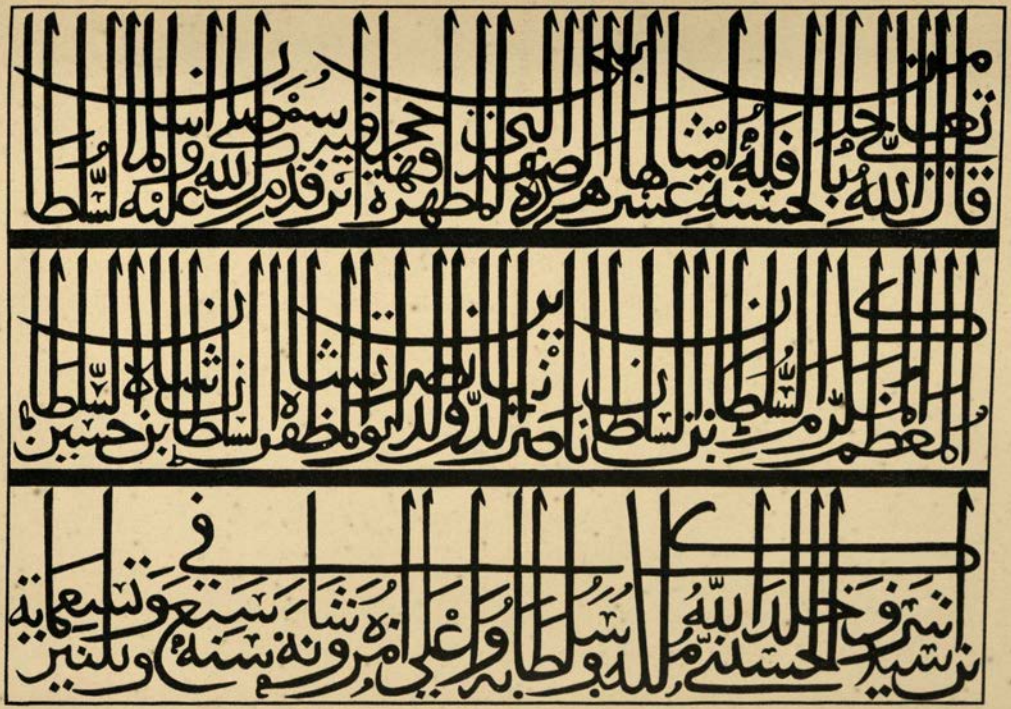


NO. 21. INSCRIPTION FROM FATH KHÁN'S MOSQUE NEAR MÁLDAH.
(NUCRAT SHÁH, A.H. 930; A.D. 1524.)



NO. 22. INSCRIPTION FROM A TOMB NEAR MÁLDAH.
(NUCRAT SHÁH, A.H. 935; A.D. 1528-29.)

INSCRIPTION 23 is from a rubbing taken by General Cunningham, from the Qadam Rasúl Mosque at Gaur. A transcript of it has been given above in the description of this mosque at p. 20.



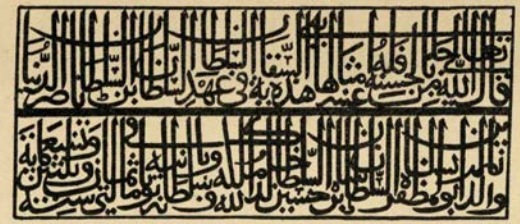
NO. 23. INSCRIPTION FROM THE QADAM RASÚL AT GAUR.
(NUCRAT SHÁH, A.H. 937; A.D. 1530-31.)

INSCRIPTION 24 is from one of Mr. Westmacott's rubbings. He found it lying on the grave of a widow in Chalsápárá, Old Máldah. It records the building of a well by a lady whose name is rather doubtfully read *Bonámálti*, but the date of the inscription is of importance, it being the latest yet discovered bearing Nuçrat Sháh's name, though *his reign* seems to have extended till the middle of 939. Mr. Blochmann published the following transcript of this inscription in J.B.A.S. 1874, Pt. 1, p. 308:

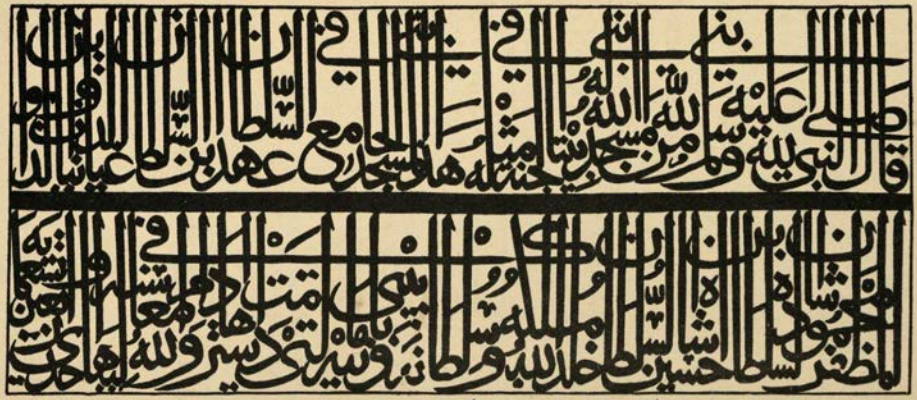
قال الله تعالى من جاء بالحسنة فله عشر امثالها * بني هذه السّقاية في عهد السّلطان السّلطان بن السّلطان ناصر الدّنيا و الدّين ابو المظفّر نصرتشاه السلطان بن حسين شاه السّلطان خلّد الله ملكه و سلطانه و بانيه بوامالتي في سنة ثمان ثلثين و تسعماية *

'God Almighty has said, "He who comes with a good deed, to him (will be) ten similar ones." This well was built in the reign of the king, the king who is the son of a king, Náçir uddunyá waddín Abul Muzaffar Nuçrat Sháh, the king, son of Husain Sháh, the king,—may God perpetuate his kingdom and his rule! Its builder is Boná máltí. In the year 938 (A.D. 1531–32).'

INSCRIPTION 25 is from a rubbing taken by General Cunningham from the Jan Jan Miyán Mosque at Sadullapúr. A transcript of it is given above at p. 10.



NO. 24. INSCRIPTION FROM A MOSQUE NEAR MÁLDAH.
(NUCRAT SHÁH, A.H. 933; A.D. 1531-32.)



NO. 25. INSCRIPTION FROM JANJANMIYÁN MOSQUE IN SADULLAPÚR, GAUR.
(MAHMÚD SHÁH III, A.H. 941; A.D. 1534-35.)

CHAPTER V.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF GAUR FROM THE MUHAMMADAN CONQUEST TO THE END OF ITS INDEPENDENCE.

THE known and authentic history of Gaur commences at the time when the city fell into Muhammadan hands, under Muhammad Bakhtyár Khiljí, A.D. 1198 (A.H. 595). The temples with their images and every remnant of Hindúism were then demolished, their stone facings reversed, and every carving bearing the image of the human form desecrated. On the reverse face of marbles, now fallen in ruins, is frequently apparent the defaced image of some Hindú god, and many of the mosques yet standing bear evidence in form and architecture to their Hindú origin.

On the death of Muhammad Bakhtyár Khiljí, which occurred shortly after his expedition to Tibet, in A.H. 602, Muhammad Sherán was elected governor of the city. He assumed the title of 'Izzuddín, but after a short period of rule he was killed in a quarrel with some of the Khiljí chiefs.

'Alí Mardán Khiljí was now appointed by the Imperial Court Viceroy of Bengal, A.D. 1208 (A.H. 605). On the death of his Imperial master, he assumed the title of Sultán 'Aláuddín, but on account of his cruelty he was assassinated, after having ruled about three years.

Husámuddín Iwáz succeeded to power under the title of Ghiyásuddín. He constructed many of the buildings in Gaur, among them a Madrasah and a Caravanserái. It was by him also that the great causeways were commenced, which have been described in Chapter I. and which were undoubtedly intended as well for military roads as for a means of general communication with the surrounding country.

In A.D. 1227 (A.H. 624), the Dihlí Emperor, Altamsh, who had before sent an expedition to enforce his suzerainty over Behar and Bengal, ordered

his son Náçiruddín to take possession of Gaur. Ghiyásuddín had apparently provoked this invasion by his encroachments on the neighbouring province of Behar. He fell in battle under the walls of his capital, which was plundered and sacked.

Náçiruddín was then appointed governor. On his death in A.D. 1229 (A.H. 626), there occurred a Khiljí revolt, and Ikhtiyáruddín Balka usurped power under the name of 'Aláuddín Daulat Sháh. This again brought the Emperor from Dihlí, with a large army, by means of which he crushed the rebellion, and in A.H. 627 he installed 'Aláuddín Jání as governor in Gaur. The latter ruled for four years and was succeeded by Saifuddín Aibak, who died at Gaur in 1234 A.D. (A.H. 631). His death is said to have been occasioned by poison.

Saifuddín was succeeded by Tughán Khán, a Tartar slave, whose appointment to Bengal was made by Altamsh, and confirmed by his daughter and successor Riziah. In A.D. 1244 (A.H. 642), the Orissians invaded Bengal and laid siege to Gaur. Though successfully repelled and forced to retire, they carried off much plunder from the neighbourhood. During the siege Tughán Khán had sent to Dihlí for assistance, and under Imperial orders Timur Khán, another Tartar slave, whom Altamsh had made Governor of Oude, came to his aid. Disappointed at finding that the Orissians had retired, Timur turned his arms against Tughán Khán. Minháj, the historian of the Tabqát Násiri, who was then on a visit to Tughán, made a vain attempt to mediate between the chiefs. A battle, in which Tughán was defeated, took place under the walls of the city. He fled to Dihlí, and Timur assumed the government in Gaur, A.D. 1244 (A.H. 642). Timur died in A.D. 1246 (A.H. 644), and by a strange coincidence his rival Tughán, who had replaced him as Governor of Oude, died the same night.

The most remarkable event of the next twelve years is the rebellion of Yúzbak Tughril Khán, who proclaimed himself king at Gaur under the name of Mughísuddín. He invaded Asám, where his expedition incurred a similar disaster to that which had fifty years before overwhelmed Bakhtyár Khiljí in Tibet. He perished in Kámrúp (Western Asám).

In 1258-59 (A.H. 656) Jaláluddín Mas'úd was governor for a few months, and was succeeded by 'Izzuddín Balban. During the latter's absence on an expedition to Eastern Bengal, where the descendants of the deposed Hindú dynasty still reigned, Gaur was treacherously attacked and plundered by

Tájuddín Arsalán Khán, the imperial governor of Karah. 'Izzuddín returned, and captured and killed Arsalán Khán (A.D. 1259).

In the beginning of the reign of the Emperor Balban (1265 to 1286 A.D.), Gaur was successively ruled over by Muhammad Arsalán Tátár Khán, who was the son of Tájuddín Arsalán Khán, and by Sher Khán and Amín Khán. The lieutenant of the last-mentioned governor was Tughril, who had been Balban's slave. In 1279, the news of the Emperor's illness reached Bengal, and Tughril, believing that the illness would prove fatal, rebelled against and imprisoned the Governor, Amín Khán, proclaiming himself King of Bengal under the title of Mughísuddín. Balban, on his recovery, personally took the field against him, and pursued him into Western Orissa, where Mughísuddín was slain. Before returning to Dihlí in 1282 (A.H. 681), Balban appointed his son Naçiruddín Bughrá Khán governor of Bengal.

Naçiruddín Bughrá Khán (I.) governed till 1291, and was succeeded by his son Ruknuddín, who was the first independent King of Bengal. He reigned under the title of Kai Káús Sháh, and is shown by inscriptions and coins to have been still reigning in 1297 (A.H. 697).

In 1302 (A.H. 702) Bengal was under the rule of Fírúz Sháh (I.), brother of Kai Káús Sháh. He extended the frontiers of his kingdom, and reigned till 1318 (A.H. 718), when he was succeeded by his eldest son, Shihábuddín, who took the title of Bughrá Sháh (II.).

Soon after his accession, Bughrá Sháh was attacked and defeated by his brother Bahádur Sháh, but managed to escape, and found, together with his younger brother Naçiruddín, an asylum with the Dihlí emperor Ghiyásuddín Tughluk Sháh. Naçiruddín, seems in 1321 to have returned to Gaur, and to have obtained influence there, but soon after he again joined his brother as suppliant in Dihlí. It was apparently at their joint instigation that Muhammad Tughluk Sháh invaded Bengal and deposed Bahádur Sháh, leaving Naçiruddín governor of Gaur.

On Naçiruddín's death in 1326, Qadar Khán was sent from Dihlí to Gaur. Eastern Bengal had a separate governor named Bahrám Khán, who resided at Sunárgáon, and on whose death in 1338, his armour-bearer, Fakhruddín made himself king, under the title of Mubárak Sháh. Though he defeated and killed Qadar Khán of Gaur, he was successfully opposed by 'Alí Mubárak, who had been in Qadar Khán's service. According to Ibn Batúta, Fakhruddín's expedition against Gaur was made in boats during the rainy

season, at the close of which 'Alí Mubárak advanced and attacked the invader, who was killed in the battle. The victor then established himself in Gaur under the title of 'Alí Sháh, and reigned from 1340 to 1346 A.D. (A.H. 740 to 746).

In A.D. 1346 'Alí Sháh was assassinated by his foster-brother, Háji Ilyás, who firmly established himself in Gaur under the title of Shamsuddín Ilyás Sháh, and founded a dynasty which, except for a short interval, ruled Bengal for a century and a half, or till A.D. 1491. In A.D. 1352 Ilyás defeated Ghází Sháh, son of Mubárak Sháh, of Eastern Bengal, and thus united the whole province under his sceptre. Paṇḍuah seems to have been his favourite residence, and it was here, according to Dow, that he was besieged by the Emperor Fírúz Sháh III. Eventually the latter recognized his independence, and he reigned till A.D. 1358 (A.H. 759).

His son Sikandar Sháh succeeded him, after having exercised vice-regal powers in Eastern Bengal during the lifetime of his father. He reigned from A.D. 1358 to 1390 (A.H. 759 to 792). He retained Paṇḍuah as his capital, and there built the famous Adínah (*i.e.* Friday) mosque, already described. During his reign the Emperor Fírúz Sháh invaded Bengal a second time, but was again baffled by Sikandar's retiring into the fortified post of Ekdálah.* In A.D. 1370 (A.H. 772) his rebellious son Ghiyásuddín established himself in Eastern Bengal, and even expelled his father on several occasions from Gaur. Taking the field in person against his son, Sikandar fell in the battle of Goálpára, near Gaur, and Ghiyásuddín succeeded him, under the title of A'zam Sháh.

Ghiyásuddín A'zam Sháh reigned till A.D. 1397 (A.H. 799). He is said to have been a fellow-student of theology at Nagar in Bírbhúm with the celebrated saint Núr Quṭb 'Álam, whose tomb at Paṇḍuah is shown in Plate 28. He appears to have been an accomplished man of convivial habits, who corresponded with the poet Hafiz, and even invited him to Bengal. There is doubt how he came by his death, which however, is attributed to the machinations of Káns (Ganesh), the ambitious Rájah of Bhitúríah. His tomb is still pointed out in Sunárgáon, his favourite residence, though others say that he was buried in the Eklákhi Mosque at Paṇḍuah.

* See Proceedings B.A.S. for August, 1874, p. 182, for Mr. Westmacott's identification of the site of this fort.

The government was inherited by his son Hamzah Sháh, who took the title of Sultánussalátín, and on whose death the influence of the disaffected Rájah set up a puppet king of the name of Shihábuddín Báyazíd Sháh. Finally in A.D. 1404 (A.H. 807) the Rájah took the reins of government into his own hands, and was hailed at Pandúah as the restorer of Hindú rule. He reigned for ten years, making Pandúah his capital, and his popularity with his Muhammadan subjects shows him to have been a sensible and tolerant ruler.

Rájah Káns's son, Jatmall, however, renounced the Hindú religion, and acknowledging the tenets of Islám, mounted the throne in A.D. 1414 (A.H. 817) under the name of Jaláluddín Muhammad Sháh. He spent large sums of money in embellishing Gaur, and built several of its finest monuments. "The town of Pandúah," says a Muhammadan writer, "became during his reign so flourishing that it cannot be adequately described. The king also built a mosque, a reservoir, the Jaláli tank, and a Sarái in Gaur. A large domed tomb still exists in Pandúah, and the tombs of his wife and son are by the side of his in the same vault." He died in A.D. 1443 (A.H. 836). According to tradition, numerous conversions to Islám were effected during his reign.

His son Ahmad Sháh, who succeeded him, was a cruel and tyrannical ruler. The embassy to the Emperor Sháh Rukh at Herát occurred during this reign, its object being to obtain protection for Bengal from the aggressions of Juanpúr. Sháh Rukh's reply to Ahmad, which seems to have been effective, will be found in Firishta's history, and an account of the embassy is given in the 'Mutlah us S'aádín.' Ahmad Sháh was murdered by two of his slaves in A.D. 1442 (A.H. 845).

The throne was then seized by Náçiruddín Mahmúd Sháh (I.), a descendant of Ilyás Sháh. He repaired the fortifications of Gaur, embellished them with three gates, and built several of the now remaining memorials. Dying in A.D. 1460 (A.H. 864), he was succeeded by his son Bárbak Sháh, who followed in his father's footsteps and reigned peaceably. It was he who first introduced Habshi or Abyssinian slaves, of whom there are said to have been at one time 8000 in his army. His death took place in A.D. 1474 (A.H. 879).

Yúsuf Sháh, the son of Bárbak Sháh, followed his father in the sovereignty, and died, after a prosperous reign of more than seven years, in A.D. 1481 (A.H. 886).

His uncle and successor, Fath Sháh, showed himself alive to the danger of having so many Abyssinian slaves and eunuchs about the Court. His measures for curtailing their influence led to their conspiring with the Paik corps of guards, who mutinied and murdered the King in his seraglio in A.D. 1487 (A.H. 892).

Bárík, the chief eunuch, was then raised to the throne, under the title of Sultán Sháhzádah, but was soon after killed by Malik Indíl, the Abyssinian Commander-in-Chief under the late king. This chief had been absent on an expedition when the mutiny occurred, and now ascended the throne under the title of Saifuddín Fírúz Sháh (II.). To him Gaur is indebted for its fine minaret as well as for several other buildings. He reigned till A.D. 1491 (A.H. 896).*

Náçiruddín Mahmúd Sháh (II.), the son of Fath Sháh, succeeded, but was assassinated within a year by another Abyssinian, who mounted the throne and assumed the title of Muzaffar Sháh. After reigning three years, his Wazir, Sayyid Husain, headed a rebellion, and Muzaffar was killed in a great battle fought under the walls of Gaur, in A.D. 1494 (A.H. 899). Sayyid Husain, whose name indicates descent from the Prophet, now mounted the throne under the name of 'Aláuddín Husain Sháh. One of his first measures was to deport from Gaur the Abyssinians and Paiks who had been the cause of so many disturbances at the capital. The latter were settled in large numbers on the south-west frontier of Bengal, where, in the Medinapúr district, their descendants have given trouble to the authorities in our own day. Husain Sháh governed with justice, and built numerous mosques and madrasahs in his dominions. It was this prince who gave a grant of land at Panḍuah for the support of the tomb of the Saint Núr Quṭb Álam, an endowment which still survives. He also built the tomb of Makhdum Sháh at Sadulapur, still a place of great sanctity, as well as the Sona Masjid, the gem of Gaur of the present day, A.D. 1525 (A.H. 919). Sultán Husain Sháh reigned prosperously for twenty-seven years, and died in Gaur, A.D. 1521 (A.H. 927).

His eldest son succeeded, under the name of Nuçrat Sháh. The kind reception which he gave to the fugitive Lodi chiefs after the battle of Panípát

* The chronology of this king has been satisfactorily fixed by a coin in the British Museum. See Blochmann, J.B.A.S. vol. xlii. Pt. 1, p. 287.—A. G.

in 1525, exasperated the Mogul Emperor Babar, who twice sent expeditions to the Bengal frontier. On both occasions Nuçrat's timely submission averted the threatened invasion. He reigned till A.D. 1532 (A.H. 939), when he was assassinated by some of his eunuchs. One building of his erection still remains, in which the inscription is perfect—the Qadam Rasul Mosque, erected in A.D. 1530 (A.H. 937).

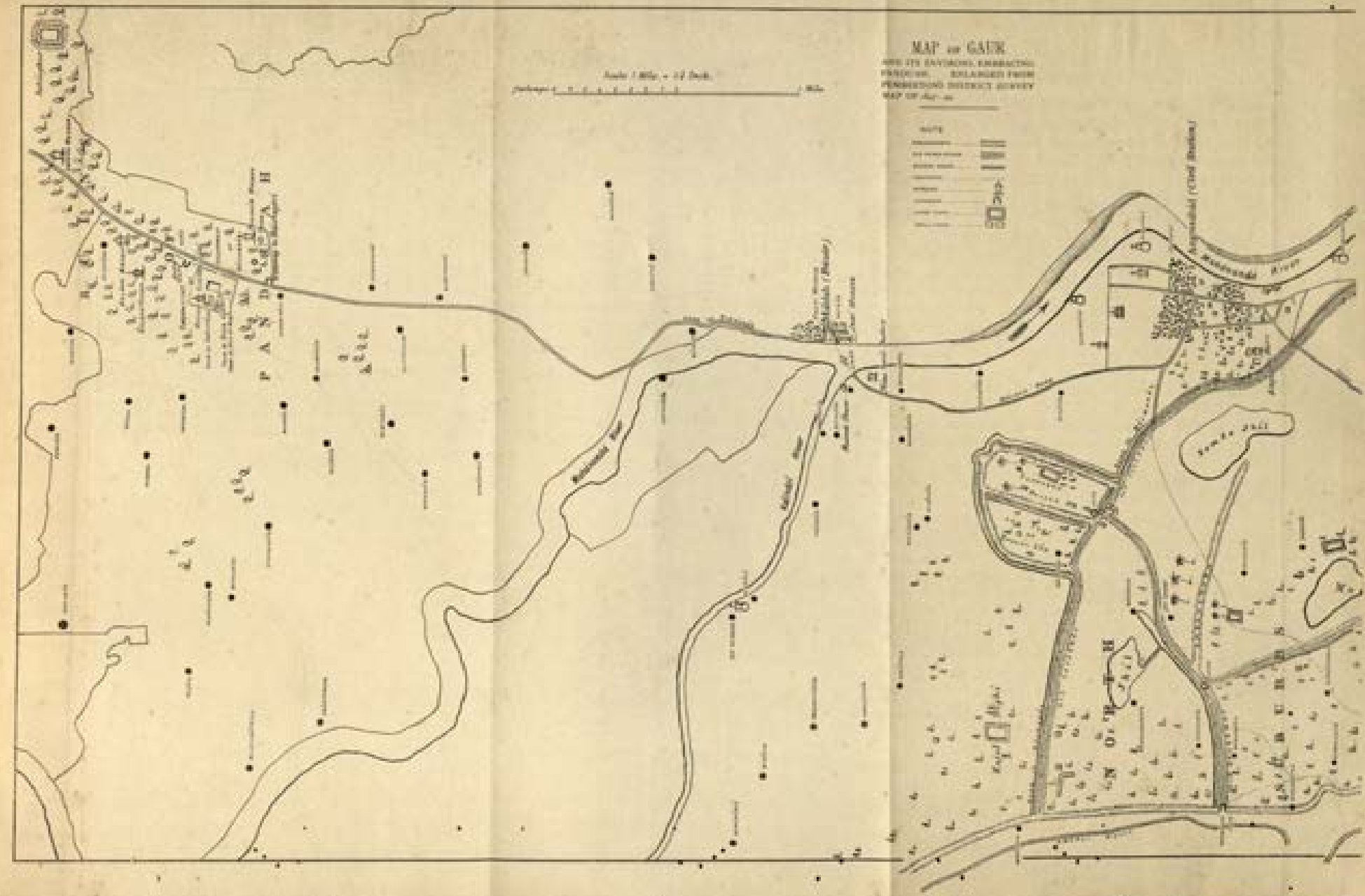
On the death of Nuçrat Sháh, his son, Fírúz Sháh (III.), was placed on the throne, but he was shortly after murdered by his uncle, Mahmúd Sháh (III.), who usurped the throne. The latter did not, however, long enjoy the fruits of his infamy. Sher Khán, the Afghán ruler of Bihar, invaded Bengal in A.D. 1537, and laid siege to Gaur,* which capitulated, and was then completely sacked by the Afgháns. Mahmúd died shortly after, and was buried at Sadulapur, where his tomb still exists.

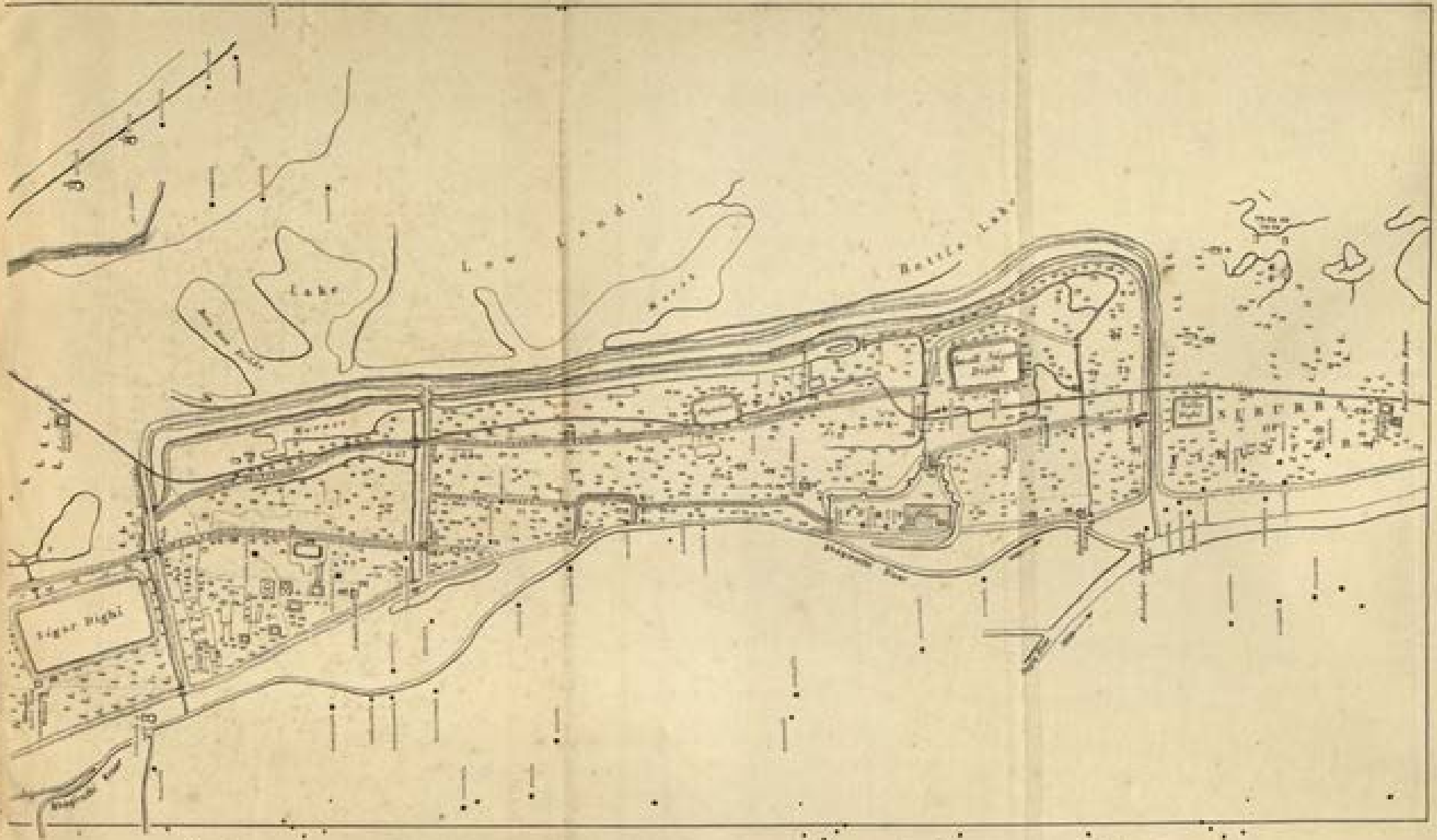
From this date, the fall of Gaur may be said to have commenced. Mahmúd was the last independent King of Bengal. During the subsequent dynasty of Sher Sháh, and under the Mogul Emperors, Gaur was under dependent governors, but its greatness had passed away, its wealth had been plundered, and its buildings neglected. In A.D. 1575, Munim Khán, Akbár's governor, then established at Tondah, charmed with the situation of Gaur, moved thither his troops and all the public offices. The season being unhealthy at the time, this vast influx of inhabitants caused a pestilence in the city; the mortality was so great that the people were no longer able to bury or burn their dead. The corpses thus left were thrown into the moat, the river, or the numerous reservoirs, and the stench arising from them necessarily aggravated the plague. The few that survived left the city, which was never again populated to any extent. Proof of the abrupt abandonment of the place, consequent on this disaster, is to be found in the many relics and the large sums of money that have been dug up from the ruins in later years.

The prosperity of Gaur reached its highest point after the restoration of the house of Ilyás Sháh, in the person of Mahmúd Sháh (I.) and his successors. In A.D. 1487 rapine and murder commenced under the Abyssinian usurpers. Under Husain Sháh and his descendants, from A.D. 1494 to 1537, Gaur again flourished and approached its former magnificence.

* The Portuguese, as we are told by Faria y Souza, sent on this occasion nine ships to Mahmúd's assistance, but they did not reach Gaur till after the city's surrender.

From its sack, by Sher Khán's officers, in 1537, and from its depopulation by the plague in 1575, it never subsequently recovered, and from that time to the present day, it has remained a scene of desolation and ruin, the abode only of tigers and beasts of prey. The later Mughal governors of Bengal seem to have conducted their administration from Rajmehal, on the west bank of the Ganges.


MAP OF GAUR
Scale 1 Mile = 12 Inch.
Mahananda River
Kalindri River


Lake
Range Light
Harbor

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